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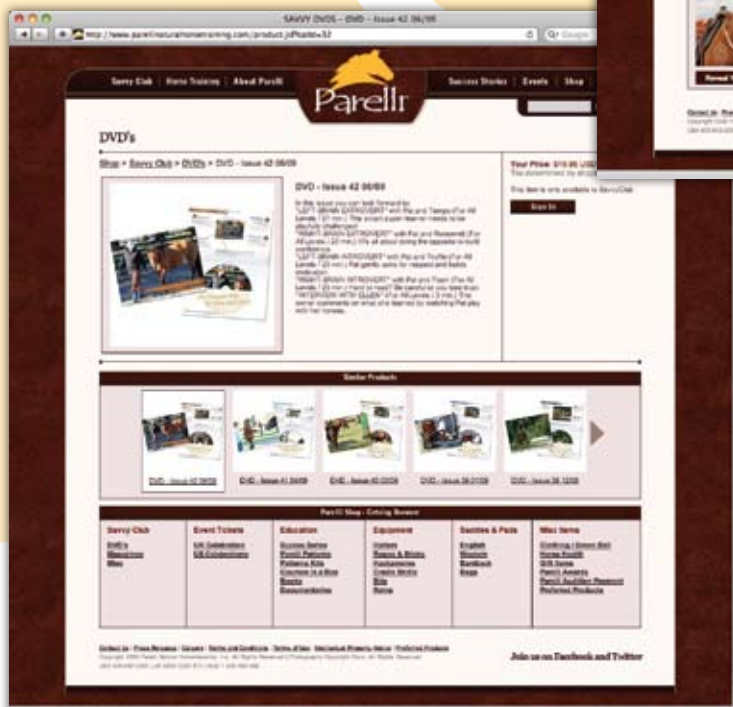
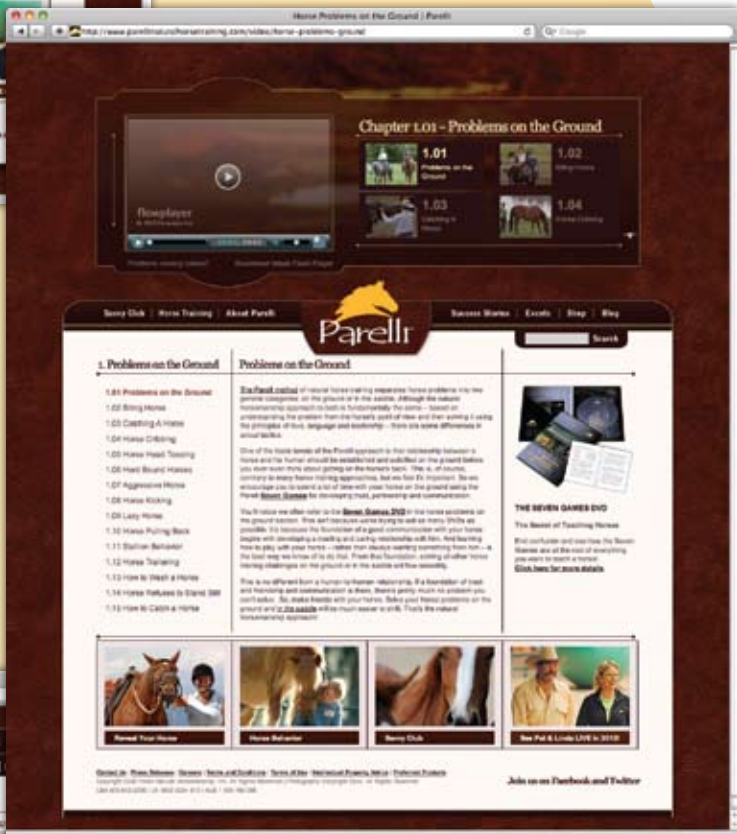


..... Official Parelli Blog

Check in on our Official Blog to keep up with what's happening in the Parelli world. You'll find entries from our Parelli Teams all over the world, and even a daily blog from Linda herself!

Video Problem-Solving

Many Parelli students start their journeys with a problem (or problems). The "Horse Training" section of our new website offers the Parelli perspective on the most common "problems" horse people encounter, and pairs text with short video clips to interest visitors in learning more.



..... Improved Webshop

Order education, equipment, auditions, and Savvy Club materials from our new, comprehensive and easy-to-navigate webshop.



Dear Friends,

When Linda and I joined together in 1993 we were committed to do more than train horses or run clinics. We focused all our energy on a very big goal—to change the world for horses and the people who love them. We set about to cause the level of horsemanship to rise and to change industry standards.

Rather than fight against injustice and ignorance, we chose to demonstrate another way—one based on the principles of love, language and leadership—to put the relationship first, develop a balanced foundation through Four Savvys and commit to never-ending self-improvement.

Along the way many people have joined the cause and helped us to share the Parelli message, taking us from humble beginnings to being the number one horsemanship program in the world. Today almost every horse discipline at every level has been touched in some way by Parelli, and many horses have been saved from being sold or destroyed by our teaching humans how to understand things from the horse's point of view. We gave life to a movement we named Natural Horsemanship, and it is now accepted as its own discipline.

The Savvy Club is about building a culture of dedicated students who join together to empower this cause. By being successful with your horse you will live your dream and at the same time help make the world a better place for horses and the people who love them.

Through horsemanship you learn to master the principles of relationships, which goes on to impact almost every other area of your life and the people you connect with.

Thank you for being part of helping us to change the world.

Yours naturally,

Pat Parelli

Linda Parelli



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Savvy Times

ISSUE 26 | FEBRUARY 2010

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Nova and Casper
at the Colorado
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Cover photo by Coco



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Getting Started

Unlimited Access

The Savvy Club Vault



Getting Info is easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. Log into www.parellisavvyclub.com
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3. Enrich your mind, increase your savvy, solve your problem and see answers to questions just like yours. Hundreds of articles, video clips and more!

Saves You Time

If you've got a very busy life the Vault is like getting a newspaper and going right to the sections and headlines you want to read. It's like having Parelli on demand. If your looking for something specific try our Google Search feature!



Get Answers:

When you have a question the answer is here. We have thousands of answers to questions from students just like you all over the world! And if your answer is not here, email us: savvyclub@parelli.com. If our staff of highly trained faculty cannot answer your questions, Pat and Linda will... plus there is the Gold Hotline for Gold members. No question goes unanswered in the Savvy Club! We are here to support YOUR success every step of the way.

News
DEAR FRIENDS...

The year 2009 finished with a big bang—our U.K. Celebration event with four thousand avid horse lovers, Savvy Summits in Pagosa, Ocala and Stoneleigh Park (U.K.), a new puppy and newly released Levels 1–4 on DVD.

First...Spain!

We flew first to Barcelona for a few days with our friend and colleague, Luis Lucio of the Spanish Olympic Dressage teams in Sydney and Athens. Over the past five years we have collaborated on training horses more naturally, and he has his grooms play with all the horses on the ground before each ride. Luis is a great believer in Parelli concepts and is constantly thinking about how to apply them in the dressage world.

On the other side of the deal, I get to ask Luis a lot of questions and ride his horses! His most advanced horse, Nervi, was recovering from an injury, so we couldn't canter, but I learned a lot as Luis coached me through half-passes, piaffe and passage. Then, on another horse, he showed me how to approach cantering on the spot. I came away with some new understandings that have already made a difference with Remmer. As you advance, sometimes it's the little changes that make all the difference. I've shared one of them in "Linda's Journey" in this issue.

Luis is a super rider, someone I try to emulate as I develop my dressage riding skills. He is also so willing to share with me and deeply committed to the success and purity of the sport, holding a high position on the Spanish Dressage Committee.

Another highlight while in Spain was a visit with Beatriz Ferrer-Salat (silver medalist, Athens) to help her with a horse that would not load into her truck. He'd had a bad experience being shipped to her after she bought him, and she knew Pat would be able to help. As you can see in the photo, things went well,

but they started a little tough because this Left-Brain Extrovert had strong ideas and was not about to offer another human his respect and trust when it came to the horse truck again!

We first met Beatriz through Luis when she was having terrible spooking issues with one of her super horses, Fabergé, and it was affecting her ability to compete—he would turn and run out of the arena when the judge doffed his hat at the salute! There was a great ending to that story; she made it to the 2008 Olympics with him. The sad news was that he had a tendon injury and couldn't compete, but he's since been winning all over Europe. It was great to reconnect with them again, and Fabergé remembered Pat. Bea has a great love for her horses, and it's clear they love her. Beauvalais (her silver-medal horse) called to her when we went to visit him in his paddock.

Later that night Bea, Pat and I had dinner at the home of Rosa Fradera, a retired international judge and member of the international dressage committee. Luis couldn't join us because he got quite sick with the flu, and that also prevented him from coming to the Celebration. We missed him, of course, and as always are so blessed to know him and be welcomed into his world.

U.K. Celebration

What a spectacular event it was this year! We had a professional event production team that worked the magic of sound, lighting and video; the audience was electric; the show went smoothly, with many great highlights; our staff and volunteers were super-helpful; and we launched the new Levels 1–4 DVD set with Pat. It was cold and rainy outside, but inside it was filled with the warmth of excited horse lovers from all over the U.K. and Europe.



Many of you knew that, at the last minute, Remmer could not fly to the U.K. with Magic because he suddenly developed an abscess in his left front foot. It was a disappointment for me, and I was worried about breaking the news to Walter Zettl. The main reason Remmer was going was to partner me in a public lesson with Walter. After finally coming to the conclusion that he could not go, I wondered what on earth I was going to do about the lesson.

Suddenly I thought of Carmen Zulauf, 3-Star Parelli Professional in Switzerland. She has a nice Warmblood that I've known for many years, and he is at about the same level of development as Remmer, with a solid Parelli foundation to Level 4 and some dressage focus over the last couple of years. I held my breath as I pressed "send" on an email asking her if she would be willing to loan me Goyani for the weekend. I knew what this would take, and it also meant that she wouldn't be performing with her horse in the Savvy Team and Spotlights.

The email came back with a lovely "Yes!" and after that I emailed Walter and put "Bad News—Good News" in the subject line. After expressing his disappointment and his concern for Remmer, he quickly looked to the future and said he'd love to come over to the U.K. early so he could help me prepare ahead of time. I was blown away by his generosity and once again realized how lucky I am. Walter said he wanted to help me develop the relationship with this horse so we'd all be in good shape for Sunday.

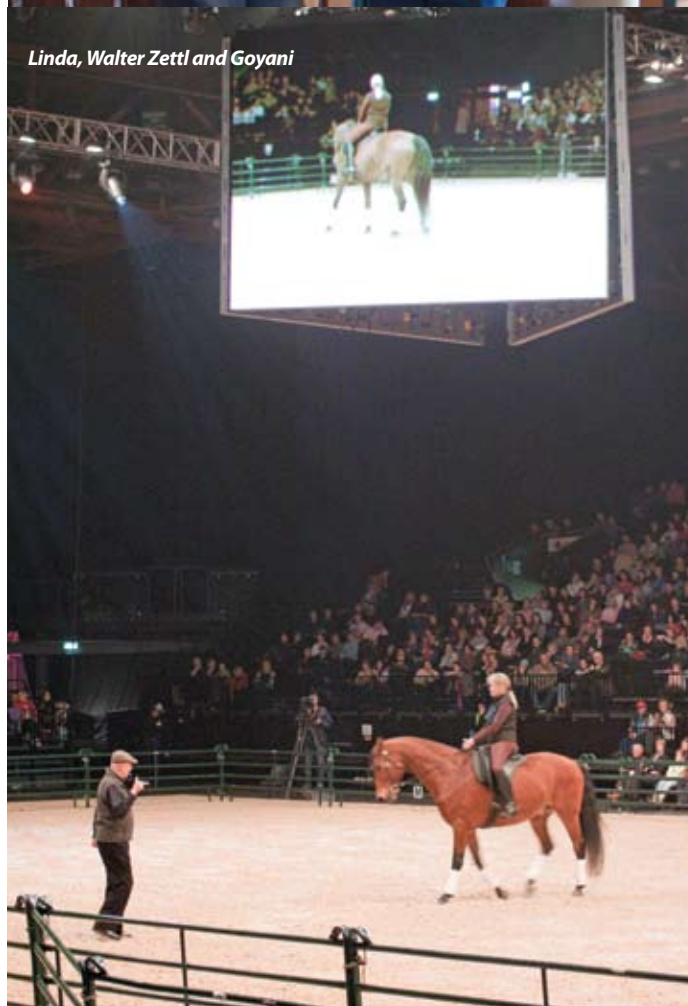
If you were following my blog, you'll know that the first few days were difficult. With Goyani being a Right-Brain Introvert, I did not want to just march in and boss him around—we had to get to know each other first. We took things slowly, and the first few days didn't look very pretty. By Friday, though, things were starting to come together, and in another session on Saturday night, after the end of the VIP session, we felt confident that Sunday was going to work out. And talk about extra pressure—Walter had invited some friends who were highly connected to the FN (Federation Nationale) in Germany! We got a lovely email from them a few days later saying that it had re-inspired them about horses and shown them what Parelli was truly about.

My lesson went well, I think—it will be interesting to see the footage! I kept getting asked if I was nervous, but I wasn't, because this was a lesson, not a performance. People love it when things go wrong!

By the way, I blogged about each day of my preparation and then after the show was over, so if you want to know more, please go to my blog—you can click in from the parelli.com home page.



Bea, Pat and Faberge reconnect.



Linda, Walter Zettl and Goyani

Left-Brain Introvert Racehorse

Pat's two sessions with the troubled racehorse were fascinating, mainly because of his Horsenality™! We are all used to seeing Pat transforming an off-the-wall, Right-Brain, crazy, scared horse that comes into the arena, but this was the opposite.

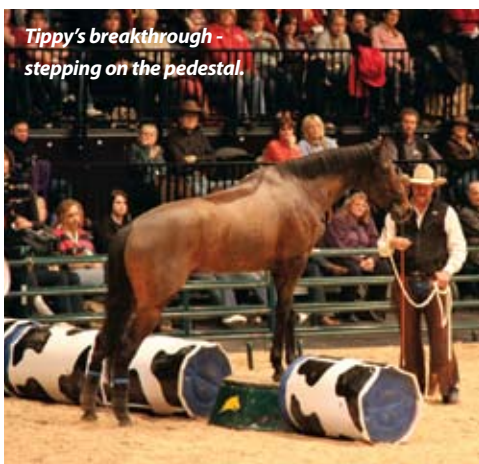
In comes this lovely young Thoroughbred, calm as could be, looking into the audience. Even when he got a little bothered, it didn't last long, and he didn't do much!

His problem? He wouldn't run! He'd come out of the gate and stop! How interesting. Luckily, his trainer was not the kind of person to fight and force him. He'd already been through that previously, and her kind approach had him more settled, but she still wasn't getting the needed results.

It was amazing to watch as Pat taught Tippy, with the first lesson being about not invading his space or pushing against pressure. Tippy was an expert at doing those things, so Pat ended up getting one of his spurs and holding it in his hand. As Tippy slowly and deliberately barged into him, Pat simply held the spur out and let Tippy push into that. Hmm...that was different. A couple of minutes later Tippy had stopped that caper!

Looking for something to have more interesting conversations about, Pat chose trailer loading. Tippy would walk in when led, but he would not go in any other way. He would actually put his head in and start pushing on the floor as he explored, but he would not lift his feet. In fact, he would lift his back feet in a little buck whenever Pat tapped him! It was wonderful to watch Pat's passive persistence and how he helped Tippy solve the problem using the pedestal positioned between the barrels. Finally Tippy got it, and everything changed. The best part was watching the audience; they had definitely been studying the program, and they could see the changes in the horse. When it all came together at last, they went crazy.

Magic was a star in these sessions, too. Pat was able to show her as the perfect partner and demonstrate the level of trust and communication between them. As Pat rode her and played with Tippy, not only did she help by nipping at the appropriate time, but she looked like an extension of him in every way. Together they were truly a horse-man. When he



wasn't riding her, Pat would send Magic to wait by the barrels or the pedestal, and she'd just relax there until he wanted her or she sensed that he needed her. She even demonstrated getting into the trailer, but Tippy didn't get it!

Spotlights

The stars of the Spotlights were several Parelli Professionals from the U.K. and Europe. Most of us had seen them in Savvy Team situations, so watching them perform individually was wonderful; it was just beautiful and often tear-producing. The performers were Alison Jones with Ginger, Rachael Morland with Phoenix, Lyla Cansfield with Maddie, Mikey Wanzensreid with his horses Red Sun and Pecos, and the only non-professional, Level 3 student Garry Stevens, with Dakota.

They were each spectacular, giving very different performances in multiple Savvys and scoring high points from Pat in relationship, strength of bond, savvy and showmanship. Pat offered some tips on how to take their showmanship to the next level, like showing Rachael how to have her horse help coil her 45-foot Line by doing a spiraling circle! One special highlight was Mikey showing what he'd been working on at a high performance level—Roman-riding his two horses bareback and bridleless!

The Savvy Spotlights are really an inspiring concept, a competition in which everyone is a winner because it is scored in categories and participants are awarded a rosette based on the level of performance they could attain that day. Most everyone got green and black rosettes, and Pat had to write Level 7 on Mikey's because we didn't have a ribbon for that level! I think best of all it shows that this is not just about what Pat and Linda can do, it's about empowering you.

Team GBR

On Tuesday Clive Hetherington, Marketing Director of the BEF (British Equestrian Federation), had arranged for Pat to work with four top riders with their sights set on the Olympics—two eventers, one show jumper and one dressage rider. Pat started with a conversation and presentation indoors before asking them to get their horses so he could see what they had going. All were confident, experienced and capable riders—the dressage rider an especially talented young man—but three out of the four horses were terribly tense, and two of them were quite dangerous. This didn't seem to faze the girls at all; they stayed on and chatted while their horses cavorted and jumped around. Pat ended up asking one girl to get off (she didn't feel that she needed to!) and then helping her to teach her horse to be more confident and calm on the ground first.

By the end of the session everyone looked quite different, with horses much calmer and new strategies for helping horses to not be so afraid. The dressage rider, who was quite advanced with a very nice horse, experienced the feeling of heightened responsiveness thanks to Pat and his flag. It was magical to watch.

U.K. and Europe Gold Summit

The third of our planned four Summits for Gold Savvy Club members went off without a hitch on a cold but sunny morning at Stoneleigh Park just across from our office building. Gold members from England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, France and Spain were there with bells on, ready to delve deeper into savvy and help make the world a better place for horses and humans.

This Summit was different from the other two because it was all indoors, so we used video footage and photos instead of live horses and focused primarily on questions and answers. In the morning it was Pat and I, then Pat had his own session on horsemanship and world-changing activities, and after lunch I did mine, which was centered on the Mastery Manuals and particularly the new information around riding with Finesse.

As the day ended we headed out for dinner and then packed our bags, ready to head home bright and early the next morning. By then we were ready to get home and see our new puppy, Vinny! We missed him, but we had a super time in Spain and England. Next year we'll be back, but in a very different scenario. Instead of being at the NEC, we'll be featured at the exciting new event "Festival of the Horse," which is replacing the Royal Show at Stoneleigh, and we'll have our own indoor pavilion. Make sure you come and say hi!

Levels 1–4 Defined by Pat!

We're very excited about the launch of the Levels Program from Level 1–4. With years of experience under his belt, Pat set about defining and demonstrating each level and each Savvy. You can tell by watching how much thought he has put into helping people to become savvy with horses as he explains reasons and principles behind the elements he's teaching.

This is the first time we've produced Levels 1–4 with Pat as your guide, and the idea is to make it both more visible and absolutely achievable. Start by watching Level 4 first; then every other level will make sense. You'll see how the whole thing builds and why it is so important to get Level 1 right.

We'll see you somewhere on the road in 2010 and look forward to a wonderful year together. Until then, remember to keep it natural and stay savvy!

Yours naturally,

Linda



2009 UK Parelli Celebration

Members of the Parelli team talk about the 2009 U.K. Celebration

What was your favorite segment of the show, and why?

Laura A.: My favorite part was the start. I loved the feeling of everything building up—all the hard work over the last few weeks and months came together, the team pulled together, we all knew where to be and what to do and then *go...* The crowd went wild, the lights, the music, and we knew Pat and Linda could do their thing!

Carmen: My favorite part of the show was the Spotlights! It was awesome to see everyone out there having fun, horses included! A lot of the Spotlighters had been part of smaller demos throughout the year, and their horsemanship and showmanship were at their peak for the Celebration. Prior and proper preparation indeed!

Garry: It's so hard to pick a favorite segment of the show, as the whole show was truly brilliant, but I did love watching Linda's session with Walter Zettl. It was a real privilege to watch

and learn from a true master, and to see Linda riding Carmen Zulauf's fantastic horse, Goyani, so well was truly inspiring.

Susie: Seeing Mikey's Savvy Spotlight with his two horses was amazing! Pat awarding him with a Level 7 was certainly well-deserved.

Can you share something funny that happened during or leading up to the event?

Laura A.: Looking back, I would say arranging the delivery of the new product. About ten days before the show, we heard that all the new Levels programs for the Celebration were stuck in Kuwait and were not going to be on a flight in the near future! We were frantically trying to arrange a plan B, which involved product being sent from Colorado to Miami and then to us if needed. We made sure to send out lots of positive thoughts about the product making it out of Kuwait.



With just 48 hours to spare we learned they had been loaded on a plane, and everything would be perfect! It was not funny at the time, but we all laughed about it afterward!

Jenny: Tuesday morning before the show, the U.K. team decided to take a picture of us all waiting to welcome Pat, Linda and the U.S. team. It was a real laugh because as we all posed with our faces pulled into excited expressions a group of people in the neighboring building saw us and started laughing! They must have thought "What a bunch of crazy people," and they would have been right!

Nicole: Learning to drive on the left side of the road is something I just can't get used to, so every time we drove somewhere I couldn't help but laugh! Also, spending time with everyone on the U.S. and U.K. teams; we have so much fun together it's hard to call what we do work!

Sam: They had the carpet rolled out all through the aisle at the venue; it was beautiful until the horses pooped everywhere. The poor old security guards had a heck of a time trying to keep it all clean! They finally gave up the worry and we did the best we could to make it professional. Horse manure and carpet just aren't a great mix.

What is something about this event that you will never forget?

Jenny: Right at the end of the last break on the Sunday, Pat and Linda's signing queues were a good one hundred people deep, and there were only five minutes before the show started again. So Pat told them all he would come back at the end of the show and sign for everyone until there was no one left. After presenting for two days straight, that was exactly what Pat did. He really put the relationship first with all his students.

Garry: That's easy: my spotlight with my horse, Dakota! I remember getting very nervous watching Alison, Lyla and Rachael disappear through the black curtains, hearing the music, the cheers and Pat Parelli. Then when Dakota and I walked through the curtains, the nerves went, and we simply enjoyed playing. Dakota was a star. It was such an honor to show the special relationship Dakota and I have to Pat, Linda, Walter, the U.K./European instructors and, of course, my home crowd and friends.

Nicole: *The volunteers!* They were such a crucial part of the show's success. Every single volunteer was willing to jump in and do anything and everything needed to keep the event running smoothly, and always with a smile! We were so fortunate to work with such a dedicated group.

Sam: The whole spectacle was the best thing I've ever been a part of. Not only the horsemanship that was on display, but the message that people can believe in, understanding of nature, the feel and timing to create better relationships and have less brace in the crazy world that is common life! Plus Magic was awesome, coming all the way from the U.S. just to show the relationship between her and Pat. 🐾



*Top: Pat and Linda with all the volunteers.
Middle: Mikey with his horses Pecas and Red Sun.
Bottom: Garry with his horse Dakota.*

Wongaburra Supercamp

A Week with Carol Coppinger

by Chris Corbidge

As I sit here typing, I am able to look out of my “office” here at my home in the Southern Grampians (in the western district of Victoria, Australia) and feel very, very fortunate. I see 22 Parelli students playing late into the afternoon.

The shadows tell me it is almost dinnertime, but no one is hurrying in to eat—they’re having too much fun out there! Carol Coppinger is giving the last lessons for the day, and the kitchen crew is cooking up a storm. There’s soft music playing, and the picture that accompanies it seems perfect.

My husband Justin and I look forward to this event every year. We always seem to be flat out getting the final touches done before the first horse trailers start appearing on the road to Wongaburra, but it feels like it’s worth it. The energy that the students bring to the place somehow makes the environment seem even more special. Wongaburra is living up to its name, which, we recently discovered, means “our home.” We want all those who visit here to feel they share a part of this place.

Our special guest instructors each year bring us a variety of accents, approaches and encouragement that remind us yet again that we belong to something very special indeed—the Parelli Program. This year’s guest professional is Carol Coppinger from Tennessee. She and her husband, Les, arrived a

few days before the camp, so we had the pleasure of their company and the chance to catch up on all the Parelli happenings—their trip to the U.K. for the Celebration, stories from the centers in the U.S. and what Pat and Linda are up to. It was a rare chance for us to share stories of our successes and challenges during the year from a professional’s point of view. I’ve also been able to get valuable feedback about my own horses. Carol played with both Cooper, my project horse, and Soleil, my new star. How wonderful to be the student and to get encouragement from someone with so much more experience and savvy. As instructors we spend our lives encouraging others to pursue their dreams, and we need the same from each other as well as from our mentors and leaders. What a treat it is to be able to have Carol here to offer this to us.

A picture says a thousand words, so instead of writing any more words I’ll let you “see” the story of our week. I’m escaping the office—I think there’s just enough daylight for a bit more horse time. 🐾





Some feedback from students who attended the Wongaburra Supercamp:

What did they like about the course?

"The great fit of the group and the individuals, the palpable desire on Carol's part to teach and make sure we 'got it'!"

"Great intimacy, safety, fun and a relaxed environment to learn in. Great dwell time for us Left-Brain Introverts! Chris is a great teacher and provides wonderful support and encouragement. Carol Coppinger was professional and expert in every sense. There was so much material I will use as I go forward."

"The harmony within the group of people—what a nice, sociable bunch of students."

What did they like about the facilities?

"The space and the toys are spot on!"

"Perfect! I never want to leave!"

"Changes! New challenging toys!"

"Wongaburra is a great venue—I loved the rainwater showers and not having to cater for any meals—great natural setting and friendly."



Levels Pathway

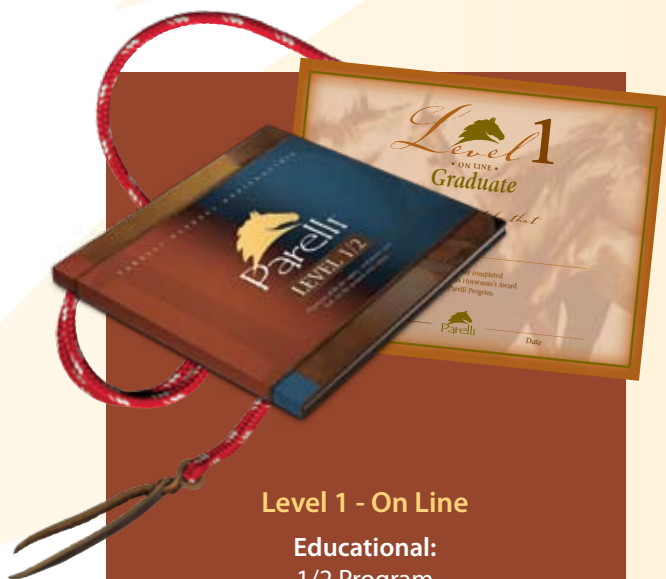
Parelli Levels Pathway

Your Journey From Level 1 to Level 4

Making progress step-by-step, increasing your savvy level by level has never been more simple.

Now you can develop in one Savvy at a time and progressively add a Savvy when you are ready until you are playing in all Four Savvys with your horse - or two Savvys if you don't ride!

For more details, go to parellisavvyclub.com.



Level 1 - On Line

Educational:
1/2 Program

Equipment:
Halter, 12-foot Line,
Carrot Stick and Savvy String



Level 2 - FreeStyle

Educational:
Level 1/2 Program

Equipment:
Natural Hackamore or
Snaffle bridle

Level 2 - On Line

Educational:
Level 1/2 Program

Equipment:
22-foot Line



Level 3 - Liberty

Educational:
Level 3 Program

Level 3 - FreeStyle

Educational:
Level 3 Program

Equipment:
Bareback Pad

Level 3 - On Line

Educational:
Level 3 Program

Equipment:
45-foot Line



Level 4 - Finesse

Educational:
Level 4 Program

Equipment:
Cradle Bridle

Level 4 - Liberty

Educational:
Level 4 Program

Level 4 - FreeStyle

Educational:
Level 4 Program

Equipment:
2nd Carrot Stick

Level 4 - On Line

Educational:
Level 4 Program

BREAKING NEWS!
The perfect product for those
who are just beginning thier journey.



GET STARTED

Communication problems are usually at the heart of frustrations and misunderstandings between horses and humans. All a horse knows to do when having trouble is to resist, and sometimes quite violently.

Solving your problems naturally.

Every problem can be solved without force when you use love, language and leadership. This is why Parelli has become the world's leading method for preventing and solving problems with horses. It teaches you how to see things from their perspective and to use strategies that make sense to the horse.

Quick fixes don't work. This is a true fix. Pat Parelli will teach you how to solve problems naturally, the way a horseman would.

The NEW Get Started DVD

New!

The ideal DVD for horse owners
who want to "Get Started" naturally!

Now Available!

The Next Generation Levels Program

Parelli is proud to introduce the all new step-by-step Levels Program featuring Pat Parelli!

Learn everything from basic safety skills to the fundamentals of performance in Levels 1 – 4. If you want the complete picture of the Parelli approach to becoming a horseman, this is the way to get it, directly from Pat Parelli.

- Understand the fundamental concepts and principles of Parelli.
- Learn how to set yourself and your horse up for success as you develop all Four Savvys to Level 4.
- Follow a step-by-step program from wherever you're starting to wherever you want to go.

LEVEL 1/2

Essential skills for *safety*, confidence and fun, on the ground and riding.

LEVEL 3

Essential skills for excellence in *communication*, bridleless riding and liberty.

LEVEL 4

The fundamentals of *performance*.



The Parelli Professionals Promise

Relationship First

We promise to put our relationship with you, our student, first.
And we promise to help you put the relationship with your horse first.
Rather than perfecting the task, we will care more about
confidence, trust, motivation and willingness . . . as true horsemen do.

Four Savvys

We promise to help you become well-rounded in your savvy
both on the ground and riding; to prepare you for success at every
level to read your horse, understand his Horsenality™ and develop
your savvy skills On Line, at Liberty, in FreeStyle and Finesse.

Never-Ending Self-Improvement

We promise to inspire and support your quest for never-ending self-
improvement. The Parelli Pathway and Savvy Club will guide you to success
and help you measure your progress every step of the way.

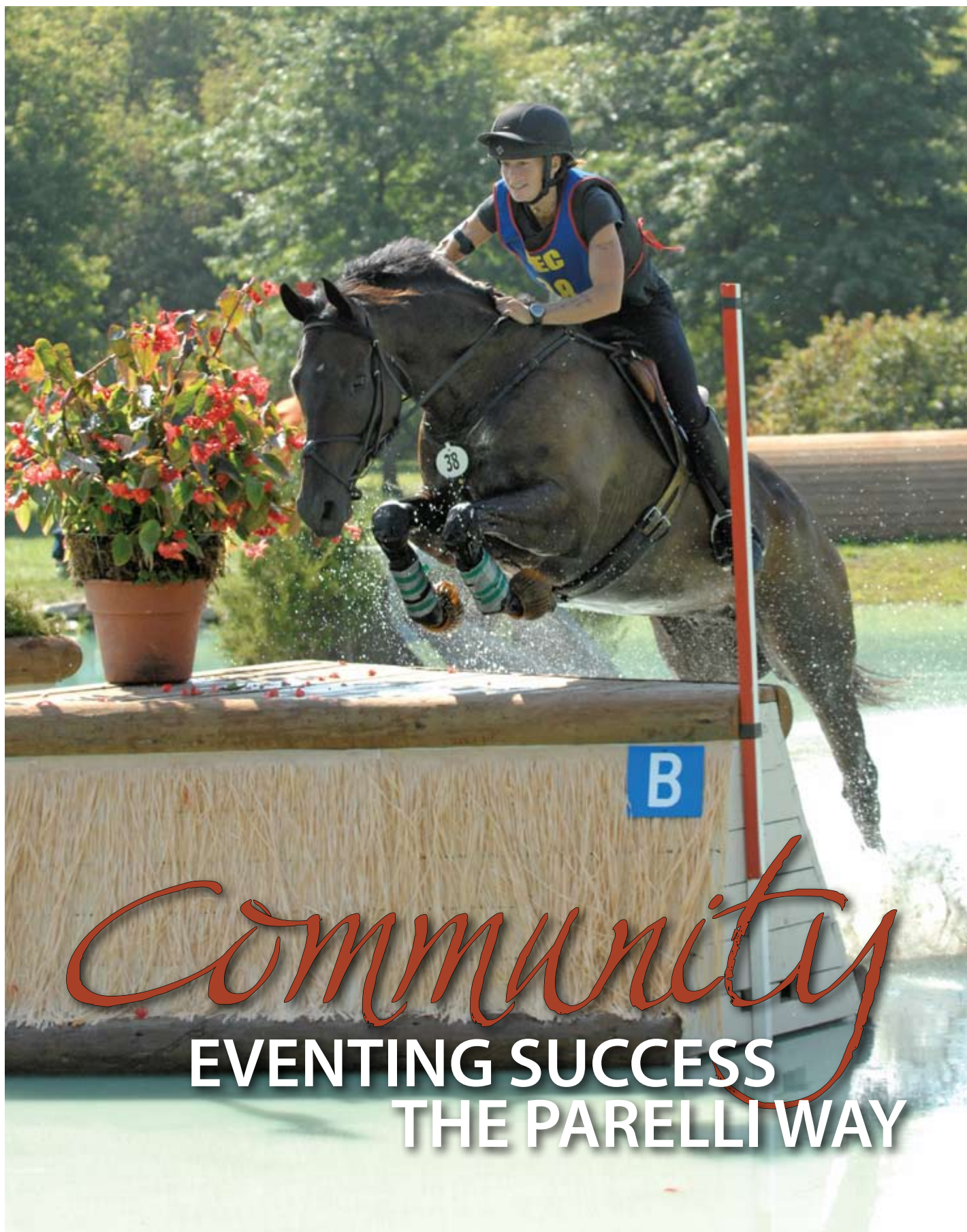


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Community

EVENTING SUCCESS THE PARELLI WAY

When I stumbled across Parelli for the first time, I just needed something to fix my trailer loading problem. My horse, George, and I were qualified for the Preliminary level regional championships in the sport of eventing, so when I learned enough to resolve our loading issue I thought I was done with “that Parelli stuff.” Little did I know that the journey was just beginning, and it was going to take me in directions I never expected. Recently I have had the opportunity to re-engage with the eventing world, accompanied by few dedicated fellow Parelli students, and I am excited to say that we are making waves in our part of the pond. Our calm, smart, brave and athletic horses are attracting the attention and curiosity of people who may never have considered Parelli before.

Instructor Certification Workshop

In March 2009, I coerced two Parelli students and friends, Michelle Donlick and Nicola Steffanini, to ride in a workshop conducted by the United States Eventing Association (USEA). The USEA runs an Instructor Certification Program (ICP) that recognizes qualified eventing instructors at five levels of expertise, and the certification process includes workshops in which instructors teach lessons under the observation of the ICP faculty. Of course, this requires volunteer students, and I told Michelle and Nicola that this was a great opportunity for some high-level, influential eventers to see how Parelli could set horses and riders up for success. Naturally, they were a little apprehensive—who wouldn’t be at the idea of riding in front of Karen O’Connor, one of the ICP faculty members present at this event—but in the end, Michelle and Nicola decided to go for it.

Michelle, who has competed up to the Preliminary level, had the opportunity to do a series of lessons with various instructors, and one thing in particular stuck out to everyone she rode for: the relationship between Michelle and her horse, Babe. Both the instructors and the observing faculty members saw the trust that Babe had in Michelle in all three phases of our sport—dressage, cross-country and stadium jumping. They were also impressed with Michelle’s tremendous emotional fitness and the fact that she never pushed Babe through pressure.

They didn’t understand that when she pulled him up in front of a jump and played the Yo-Yo Game instead of just going over it was just a game and would not teach him to refuse the jump.

For example, there was an exercise during the stadium jumping portion of the workshop that was particularly difficult. Approaching it, Michelle could feel Babe’s confidence dropping, so instead of pushing him through it, she took a fresh approach and tried again. On the second attempt Babe handled it perfectly. Michelle explained her decision to the instructors and faculty, and the faculty understood and supported her actions.

The less-experienced instructors listened and saw what Michelle was talking about, but didn’t quite make the connection that this relationship had developed naturally, not artificially. They didn’t quite understand why Michelle placed her saddle the way she did or why she didn’t tighten the noseband to make Babe close his mouth. They didn’t understand that when she pulled him up in front of a jump and played the

Yo-Yo Game instead of just going over it was just a game and would not teach him to refuse the jump. Although they certainly noticed the difference, they didn’t quite get it the way the more experienced faculty did. We hope that examples like this next one will help them understand.

As Michelle and Babe left the ring after one of her jumping lessons, her reins fell down, and Babe stepped on them. You could hear all of the instructors gasping and then holding their breaths, waiting for the imminent panic and disaster. Babe, however, is a Parelli partner through and through. He just waited calmly until Michelle freed him, and then they went on their way. As we left we could hear Karen O’Connor telling the instructor-trainees, “That is what I am talking about. Did you see that? That is huge!” When you’re deep into the study of Parelli, sometimes



you forget that it's the little things you take for granted that really make an impression on people. People like Karen, though, really understand, and they're in a position to influence many others who don't—yet.

Nicola doesn't have the same level of experience as Michelle, so she rode in a Novice level stadium jumping lesson with my Left-Brain Introvert mare, Maggie. When Maggie came to me she was a very, very difficult horse. It took me several years to get her through Level 3 and to the point where someone else could safely play with and ride her. Nicola had taken on Maggie as a project while I was busy traveling, and I think I was even more nervous than Nicola as we waited for her turn to ride. This was going to be a real test for Maggie—and for me!

Well, all that nervousness was definitely unnecessary. Maggie and Nicola truly shone. Nicola was careful to help Maggie through her thresholds and maintain her confidence. Maggie did everything with ease and was relaxed and rhythmic throughout the lesson. When the instructor would ask Nicola to come in for a break, Nicola would drop the reins, and Maggie would cock her hind leg, relaxed and completely happy. Again, the faculty were impressed. They raved about Maggie's attitude, and they could not believe that she had had such a troubled background. Talk about racking up points for the Parelli program!

USEA Recognized Competition

In the spring of 2009 Michelle, Nicola and I headed to Tryon, North Carolina, for a USEA recognized horse trial—the one-day version of an event, still containing all three phases of competition. From the moment we unloaded the horses, one thing was evident: our horses were truly prepared. They were relaxed, happy and confident, and again, people noticed.

Dressage went smoothly, and stadium jumping was a total non-event. The warm-up areas for the lower-level divisions can be quite scary sometimes—horses running around all right-brain, rushing at fences, rushing away from fences, barely under the control of their right-brain riders. In the midst of all that, Maggie and Nicola looked like old hands—a picture of harmony and relaxation. People watching Nicola's warm-up and her subsequent penalty-free round were quite impressed and couldn't believe that this was Nicola and Maggie's first show.

Cross-country also went off well, and Michelle and Babe demonstrated their consummate partnership at a particularly difficult spot on the Preliminary course. On a downhill approach to a jump Babe slipped and almost fell, but Michelle re-balanced him within seconds and set him up for the jump that was only two strides away. This is where the relationship and

Michelle's years of eventing experience really came together. Michelle knew just what to do and how to do it, and Babe, completely trusting, listened to her happily and without any opposition reflex. Michelle was the perfect leader for him in that moment, and his respect for and confidence in her helped her to help him out of trouble. That's what I call savvy!

Five years ago, I had no idea what Parelli was, nor was I interested in finding out. I didn't even know I had a problem.

Throughout the show I had judges, several trainers and fellow competitors—as well as one student's grandparents—comment on how nice and well-mannered our horses were. One judge was intrigued by the fact that I was a Parelli Professional, and a fellow trainer told me that she really admired Parelli. Beyond all this positive feedback, we completed the event in good form. Michelle finished second with Babe in the Preliminary division and fourth with her young horse, Rhapsody, in Beginner Novice. Nicola and Maggie also finished fourth, and all three pairs qualified for the regional championships!

Prior and proper preparation prevents P-poor performance. Sound familiar? Five years ago I had no idea what Parelli was, nor was I interested in finding out. I didn't even know I had a problem. I was one of those USEA instructor-trainees in one of the very first Instructor Certification workshops—it was led by Karen O'Connor and two other eventing greats. I remember watching Karen demonstrate the Squeeze Game over a cross-country jump and thinking "Well, that's cool, but..." I know where those instructors are coming from, and I hope they will make the connection that I did. I hope they will come to understand that Parelli is the ultimate way to train your horse and the best foundation for performance. 🐾

Update:

Nicola and Michelle went on to qualify for the USEA American Eventing Championships, a national event hosted in Illinois in 2009. Michelle finished eleventh in the Prelim division, and Nicola finished in the top 20 at Novice. Also worth noting: Nicola qualified for the AEC while participating in the minimum number of shows required, finishing in the top five every time she competed.

Member Profiles

Member profiles will highlight a handful of Savvy Club member each month, allowing them to share their stories with the Parelli Community. If you would like your profile to appear in Savvy Times, email your responses to the following questions and a picture of yourself and your horse to savvytimes@parelli.com.

Lin Pilcher

Fawkham, Kent, U.K.

How did you find Parelli?

I found Parelli three years ago. I was totally disillusioned with my showing and dressage, and my instructors were encouraging me to put in stronger bits and wear spurs, which I knew would upset my horse and ruin our relationship. A friend talked me into attending a Parelli Conference, and I was hooked.



How long have you been playing with your horse?

I have been playing with Namara for three years and am continually finding out more and more about her and myself. We have stopped all competing now and just have fun and develop our relationship and friendship.

Describe the horse in your life.

Namara is a 14-year-old chestnut Arabian mare I have owned since she was 11 months old. She is a very gentle, highly sensitive Right-Brain Extrovert who flips to Left-Brain Introvert and back again incredibly quickly, keeping me on my toes.

What level are you playing in?

We are playing in Level 1 for cantering and the Sideways Game and probably Level 4 for the rest. It's very hard to judge, as when we are both "collected" everything appears possible and within reach.

What are your horse dreams/goals?

My dreams and goals are to prove to Namara that the Sideways Game and cantering are not the terrible emotional dramas she believe they are. I want to prove to her that she can put her feet anywhere and still be totally safe.

What has your horse taught you?

Namara has taught me that tasks and time are totally unimportant. We work a pattern and consider what in it is uncomfortable. It could be anything, so we stop the pattern and work on her needs (or mine). And wow, the next time we work that pattern that issue is no longer apparent.

Tell us about the best moment with your horse.

The best moment I have had (and I have had some repeats) is when Namara and I tune in together and I am no longer aware of giving any direct instructions or aids to her. We move together, two bodies, two minds acting as one mind, one body. It makes me cry.

Jane Farhall

Mount Doran, Victoria, Australia

How did you find Parelli?

Through a friend at work. I had a very bad fall from Red and ended up not being able to ride very much out of fear.

How long have you been playing with your horses?

Too many years for where we are at! About eight years.

Describe the horses in your life.

Red is a 1st x QH gelding. He is nearly 17 years old and is a Right-Brain Introvert. He is athletic and gorgeous! I also have a miniature pony, Scoota, as a buddy for Red and friend for my twins. Scoota is seven years old and is a Left-Brain Extrovert.

What level are you playing in?

Level 3 with Red and Level 2 with Scoota (On Line and Liberty).



What are your horse dreams/goals?

To have the best relationship I can and to enjoy the time I have with my horse 100%! I need more confidence in myself to be able to advance further for the benefit of us both. I would love to have a change of career and get into the horse industry in some form.

What has your horse taught you?

To be patient and polite, and that he is very sensitive.

Tell us about the best moment with your horse.

I have had so many great moments with my boy. I have horses purely for enjoyment, and they bring me joy each day! Red has a sleep each day, and one of the best moments was when he allowed me to approach him while he was lying down. I sat down with him and was able to stroke him. Heaven.

Kristin Schmidt

Stagecoach, Nevada, U.S.

How did you find Parelli?

I read about it in a horse magazine and then went to a Parelli event in Reno, NV in July 2007.

How long have you been playing with your horse?

Officially, we've been playing since January of 2008.

Describe the horse in your life.

Julian is an 11-year-old Arabian gelding. He is a Left-Brain Introvert that we've had since the day he was born. He is a gentle soul, and although he can be pushy, he would probably walk through fire for me.

What level are you playing in?

We are official Level 1 graduates and are progressing through Level 2.

What are your horse dreams/goals?

My horse dream is to ride bareback and bridleless on a beach. My Parelli goals include becoming a top instructor.

What has your horse taught you?

Julian has taught me how to slow down and take my time. He's taught me to be more sensitive to his side of things.

Tell us about the best moment with your horse.

My best moment just happened recently. After learning so much at the Reno Celebration, and then at a clinic with Tara Harris and Trevor Carter, I was playing with Julian and the pedestal. He stepped up onto it once. Then, when I asked him again as I was standing on it, too, he gently stepped up with me. It nearly brought tears to my eyes. We stood there together for a while—I just stroked him, and he turned his head to me. Wow, what a powerful moment!



Global Community

Reader submissions from around the world

All Four Savvys

Peter Fuller, Pennsylvania, U.S.

After studying Parelli for many years and achieving Level 3, I decided that I was ready to become involved in Reined Cowhorse and Ranch Versatility competitions. I'd like to share the experience I had as a result—an experience I refer to as “visiting the dark side.”

It sort of slipped up on me. I became very goal-oriented and direct-line and actually pretty much gave up on the three most important Savvys; I was concentrating mostly on Finesse because my focus was cow work. The feedback I got from my horses and the nasty feeling I developed inside gave me a huge wake-up call, and thanks to the Parelli program, I am back on track, working on my Level 4/5 skills. I should have a DVD of all four Savvys to send in within the next 30–60 days. Interestingly, by working on my Levels and playing in all four Savvys, I've already noticed my horses getting better and better in competition. All my direct-line thinking has been removed due to my focusing on the Levels program. As Pat says, “Maybe the horse is there for us to learn how not to be so

direct-line.”

Once you experience the dark side, you can never go there again, and when you return to the Parelli methodology, not only do you appreciate it more, but you become much better at it. I'm not saying that I left the fold of



Parelli, but my principles were out of whack. What a thing to experience firsthand. While Pat and others have spoken about what may happen to horses in competition training regimes, little is said about the negativity the human may go through in this situation. Although I competed for over 25 years in Team Roping, and at a fairly high level years ago, at that time I regarded the horse as a tool and was unaware and innocent of a horse's thoughts, feelings and needs. It wasn't until I met Pat and started the Parelli program that my outlook changed.

Most important, Parelli has given me the insight to hear what my horses are telling me now that I am starting to compete again. (I recently won the year-end Atlantic Reined Cow Horse Association Championships, winning a saddle and a buckle.) Thanks, Pat and Linda, for all you do.

A Message for Franco Giani

Chiara Nava, Casalgrande, RE, Italia

“Franco.... sono già più bravi di te!!!!”

(English translation: “Franco, they are just better than you.”)



No Such Thing as Coincidence

Cynthia Blauenstein, Lausanne, Switzerland

I don't believe in coincidence. Carmen Zulauf (Licensed Parelli Professional) crossed my road at a time I did not yet have my own horse and was taking lessons in a big stable. This discovery and meeting her was a real shock.

I wasn't done chewing on all I had learned in the Level 1 clinic when I started looking for my own horse. Glorioso, a

magnificent Spanish four-year-old, looked at me, and his eyes said, "Please take me out of here!" Without thinking, reacting on an instinct, I chose to take him with me. That I could not even get on him without him taking off at a dead run didn't really register in my conscious mind. On the road I called Carmen and decided that the best thing would be to bring him to Avenches, to get my horse tamed. And since there is no coincidence, it just happened that there was a whole month that was dedicated to young horses and horses with special



needs. Carmen, Wally, Dave and Maude (all Licensed Parelli Professionals based in Switzerland)—each one at their time—participated in starting Glorioso and

educating me! It was spectacular, very animated and emotional. I really know now that the start is not something; it really is everything for both the horse and the human.

Today Glorioso is seven years old. He really carries his name well, and together we share activities such as skijoring, swimming in the lake, trail riding, dressage, playing On Line and at Liberty, jump rope and even art shows. In the name of my horse, I would like to thank Pat Parelli for helping humans understand horses.

Barrel Racing Update

Sharon Austin, Illinois, U.S.

BJ Austin was featured in the November 2009 issue of Savvy Times. Since then BJ went on to Nationals and actually won



a saddle on a young horse that has had nothing but Parelli training. BJ was so proud. Phantom is his youngest horse, and he is training her to be a champion. Maniac, his good horse, suffered a pulled muscle, and we decided not to run him. We wanted him to heal, so BJ substituted Phantom. This was her first time running inside, and she has only been racing for one season. Not bad for a young horse with the Parelli foundation and confidence. Well done, BJ!

Parelli Poem

Claudia Alexandra Monteiro, London, Ontario, Canada

I play with him at Liberty
And watch him as he flies
I see him lick and chew his lips
And reward him when he tries
Love, Language, Leadership
The keys to our success
And if we take the time it takes
He'll know it more than less!
Rhythm, Relaxation, Retreat
The nose, neck and maybe the feet!
We want to be his partner
We want to be his friend
He knows how we are feeling
So we cannot pretend
If you are passively persistent
In the proper position
You will achieve success
In your Horsemanship mission
We'll play the Seven Games
And play Friendly with the gear
We'll practice on the ground
And there's nothing to fear
We won't ride for today
We will ride for tomorrow
We won't be disappointed
We won't be filled with sorrow
There's nothing in the way
For it's just me and you
'Cause we can do anything
And make our dreams come true!
We'll stop when it is good
I'll rub you on your belly
We will be truly happy
'Cause it's all thanks to Parelli!

The Opposite of Black and White

Not long after I began studying Parelli, I briefly boarded my young horse, Journey, at a “normal” barn managed by a professional horse trainer who specialized in starting young horses. At the time I first moved there Journey was about to come three, and the trainer offered to help me with her first rides.

I smiled and thanked her, but I never brought it up again, and neither did she. I started Journey myself, working off the Parelli Level 1 kit, a little over ten years of riding experience and enough confidence to patch the two together. Neither Journey nor I got hurt or scared, but we sure got frustrated at times as we floundered through that first six months under saddle. Though I'm proud of what we did together, I have to wonder if I might have saved us both a whole lot of confusion and doubt if I had only accepted that offer of assistance. At the time, however, I saw nothing but Parelli and not-Parelli, and that trainer and I were on opposite sides of the fence.

I ended up leaving that barn after having been there for only a handful of months. In the time I was there, however,

I watched the trainer ride several young horses each day. I watched her take a Thoroughbred filly out to gallop in the fields three days in a row and then take her for a long walk on a loose rein on the fourth day. The filly didn't jig a single step or waver off her path; she was the epitome of maintain gait and maintain direction, and she was barely two years old. Day after day, I watched that trainer groom and tack her ground-tied colts, ride them confidently in the arena and on trails and then hand-graze every one of them for at least ten minutes after her ride. I never saw her do anything with one of her youngsters that wasn't an image of love, language and leadership in equal doses. I often look back and wonder what I might have learned if I had only looked beyond the tools and the words she used



to see the underlying savvy. Because, without doubt, she was one of the most savvy horsewomen I have ever had the privilege to observe.

When I first committed to Parelli, everything was black and white to me. Parelli was the right side of the horse world, and everything else was wrong. To be honest, that attitude may have helped me in the beginning, when I was a lone Parelli student surrounded by critics and skeptics and I didn't know enough about it to explain it to anyone else. Believing that I was "right" helped me stay true and determined, and it kept me from going back to normal when the road got rough. Also, I can't deny that I knew and met plenty of people along my journey who supported my black-and-white perspective—the kind of people who made me want to either curse or cry. Thankfully, however, I also met the kind of people who, over time, helped me see that the truth is a lot more complex than that.

We need to communicate with people, and that means understanding their ideas just as much as it means sharing our own.

I met a dressage queen whose horses positively adored her and performed eagerly and with relaxation. I met a hunter-jumper trainer who had incredible feel and understanding for horses. I met two "normal" women whose compassion for horses of all breeds, sizes and ages knew absolutely no boundaries. I also met a few people who carried orange sticks and used rope halters and did things to their horses that made me cringe. Over time, I learned that the opposite of black and white is a kaleidoscope of unique people with unique attitudes and knowledge. Though it requires more thought and effort, I've found the full-color version of reality to be a whole lot more rewarding for me and for the people whose paths I cross.

The third principle of Parelli states that communication is two or more individuals sharing and understanding an idea (you knew that already, right?). In Pat's own words, "If I pat my leg and the dog comes, we've communicated. But I can talk to a post until I'm blue in the face, and I'm just talking." If we're going to change the world for horses and humans, it won't be by talking or judging or being self-righteous. We need to *communicate* with people, and that means understanding their ideas just as much as it means sharing our own. There are many horsemen and horsewomen out there who are kindred spirits disguised by labels we might not like, tools we might not use or techniques we might not understand. It's critical to remember that techniques and tools in and of themselves are rarely right or wrong; it all depends on the attitude and intent

behind them. There's a reason why attitude is the first of the Seven Keys to Success: it's the most important.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "You must be the change you want to see in the world." If you want people to be more open-minded, to take the time to really consider Parelli, start by being more open-minded and curious yourself. Take the time to look beneath the surface, and you'll find people whose hearts are in the right place. Emphasize what you have in common, and you'll discover opportunities to both learn and teach. Communicate, and you'll see that we can work *with* people to change the world instead of working against them. 🐾



Desperate Horse Wife

A Husband's Tale

by George Nowak, the Barefoot Man

She's up every morning just as the tropical sun appears over the reef. After a cup of caffeine she changes into her work gear: breeches, boots and a tattered, well-worn straw hat. I receive my morning kiss on the cheek, and then she's off to the ranch. It might not be a ranch by North American standards, but the Coral Stone Ranch isn't in North America—it's tucked away in the center of Grand Cayman Island.

To get to the ranch you drive through and around banana plantations, coconut groves and lazily wandering cattle. Beyond the patched-up fences that define the ranch's perimeter there are poisonous plants, volcanic rock and huge mango trees that house wild parrots and dragon-like iguanas. Among the Caribbean vegetation and wildlife, the Coral Stone Ranch is home to about 20 horses, many of which are of the somewhat scruffy variety. In this company my wife and her robust Holsteiner mare, Leonora, stand out a bit. Leonora draws attention all on her own, considered by many local horse enthusiasts to be the most beautiful mare on the island; add in my Parelli girl, waving her Carrot Stick™ and Savvy String as if conducting an orchestra, and they're guaranteed to draw curious eyes. That's my girl, my desperate horse wife.

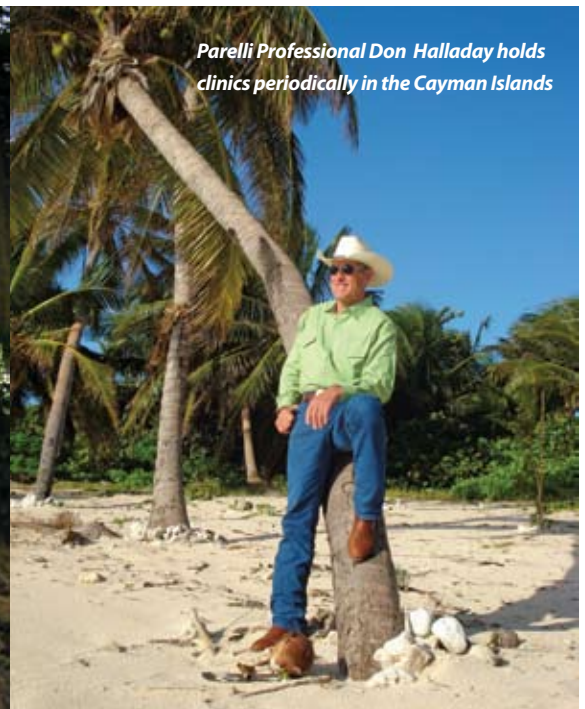
Cayman is a small place with maybe 50 horse owners—a mix of rodeo buffs, dressage riders and animal lovers who simply

keep their horses as pets. There are a few Parelli enthusiasts, and of course, my wife is one of them. She owns about every Parelli product ever created, and she loves the challenge of communicating and building a relationship with her horse—so much so that I don't seem to see her much these days. She's always with Leonora, or in town purchasing hay, shavings and cubes, or at the UPS office to pick up her latest shipment of Winnie's Cookies and Parelli DVDs. I'll bet there are many spouses out there who can relate to my position; it's tough being the husband of a Parelli girl whose truck displays the bumper sticker "My horse is more pampered than my husband!" I make my living as a professional musician and songwriter, and if she didn't own that horse, I'd be pretty well off. But I love her—my desperate horse wife.

A few years back, after the untimely loss of her previous horse, my wife acquired the beautiful Leonora, who was born



Regina and her horse Leonora



Parelli Professional Don Halladay holds clinics periodically in the Cayman Islands

in Germany, transported to Central Florida and then later purchased by a very affluent resident of Grand Cayman (not me, folks). Before my wife took over ownership of her, Leonora had always been housed at huge estates where she had first-rate stables and serene surroundings. When moved to Coral Stone Ranch, the poor horse was transfixed in an eternal state of “spook.” The high-pitched squawking of parrots, mooing of cattle and rustling of trade winds through the adjacent jungle turned a pampered Holsteiner into a panicky, four-legged nut case. Of course, Parelli came to the rescue. Through the teachings of 3-Star Parelli Professional Don Halladay and a vast collection of Savvy Club DVDs my wife has built a foundation and a relationship, and Leonora has become a willing and cooperative partner. Now they take frequent trail rides beyond the boundaries of Coral Stone Ranch. A passing cow, barking dog or rattling of farm machinery no longer leads to anxiety and confusion.

Since we’re on the subject of willing partners, I have also learned something along the way. When Leonora is happy, my wife is happy.

A few weeks ago my “other half” began being extra nice to me. She’d rub my feet, pour my beer and let me go fishing without a quarrel. Something was definitely up, and I was apprehensive about her affectionate tactics. Don’t get me wrong; after all these years we’re still madly in love, but let’s not forget that bumper sticker: *“My horse is more pampered than my husband.”* If my level of pampering suddenly went up, what did that mean for Leonora? More important, what did that mean for my credit card? Eventually my suspicions paid off—although that might not be the best way to describe what happened when I assessed my monthly Visa card statement. There it was, between the restaurant and tack store charges, hidden in a muddle of numbers, dates and codes: one brand new Parelli English Fluidity Saddle!

I coughed, cleared my throat and turned to confront my desperate horse wife. Her face was hidden behind a *Savvy Times* magazine, yet she quickly sensed my displeasure. Before I had the opportunity to interrogate her about the recent unauthorized purchase of Parelli merchandise, she winked at me and said, “I love you, dear.” I sighed, threw my hands in the air and thought of the bumper sticker that adorns my vehicle: *“If my savings were as big as my manure pile, I’d be rich.”* 🐾



What does the Barefoot Man get out of this horsemanship deal (aside from a happy wife)?

Inspiration. George’s wife, Regina, prompted him to write, record and sell several popular local radio hits detailing the plight of a horsewoman’s husband in lyrics such as these:

*Since she rides horse I don’t see her no more.
She only comes home to clean her boots and saddle
Then she walks out the door.
Oh, how I miss her, more than ever before.
Since she rides horses I don’t see her no more.*

A Family That Parellis Together Stays Together!

Being on the road as a Parelli Professional is incredibly fulfilling and an opportunity that I once only dreamed about. One thousand miles from home in the winter, one of the most difficult things for me is not seeing my family, especially my nine nieces and nephews back in Ohio.

by Jesse Peters, 3-Star Parelli Professional

One of our favorite family pastimes is horse camping, playing and riding together as a family. When the phone rang and I was asked to facilitate a Parelli Kids play day for Parelli student Nancy Smorch and her family, I jumped at the opportunity! I was even more excited when I found out that Jen Hall, 1-Star Parelli Professional, was going to be on hand with her miniature partner, Lil Stu, to assist.

Our goals for the day were to bring Parelli kids together from around the community, have a safe play day and have loads of fun!

The kids played the Seven Games and used the Parelli Patterns as their focus and purpose.

Our play day took place on the first morning of daylight savings time, and slowly but surely the five participants arrived, with a little sleep still in their eyes, a touch of nervousness and excitement at the chance to play with other Parelli kids who shared their love of horses. We started with some

name games to work out some of the nerves and to help everyone get to know one another a bit.

As the group started to relax and have some fun, it was important to teach the kids about safety with horses, as that was our top priority. To simulate this we played the Seven Games in pairs and practiced the importance of the Yo-Yo Game for creating a safe personal zone around each of the kids. The kids had played the Yo-Yo Game many times but didn't have a clear understanding of how Game #4 can keep everyone safe! We also talked about how it was okay to let go of the rope if anyone ever felt unsafe or over-horsed (something even we adults often forget).

With safety as a foundation and the excitement rising, it was time to play! The horses came out, and the kids' eyes brightened with joy as they were invited to tell us about their relationships with their horses. Jen took the opportunity to play with some of our youngest kids, giving these students individualized guidance and creative ideas. It worked out

perfectly, as she was able to challenge and play with some of the younger students while I led the more advanced group to start experimenting with new and fun things to do with their horses.

The kids played the Seven Games and used the Parelli Patterns as their focus and purpose. They were absolutely brilliant! Everyone played at his or her own level, and the students, ranging in age from 7 to 14, knew how to stay safe while showing how far they'd come in their Parelli journeys.

The next challenge, which brought amazing creativity and smiles, was the "Can You?" Game.



The kids partnered up to challenge each other with their creativity using the games and obstacles. “Can you....get your pony to go sideways over this pole?” Little did we know that the fun would result in challenges that sounded like “I’m not sure if I can do this, but I’d love to try, and for you to try, too!” It quickly became an opportunity for the students to challenge themselves and one another with tree stumps, bouncing balls, cones, barrels and tarps! Jen’s young group was having a ball. They asked their horses to put their feet up on a giant tree stump. It was amazing to see the kids laughing, running and playing with their horses as only kids can do!



After playing the “Can You?” Game we started the Parelli Puzzle challenges, and the fun continued. By mid-afternoon the little feet were slowing down, the Florida sun was warming up and we all caught a rest under a huge Spanish-moss-covered oak tree for a quick recap of the lessons of the day.

As the Parelli Kids Day came to a close, I was energized from the time we had spent together. The opportunity that I have every day in my life as a Parelli Professional allows me to help others on their Parelli journey while growing in my own. I often hear students say they wish that they had found Parelli sooner in their horsemanship journeys. We each have the opportunity to help kids find the incredible passion and joy that comes with Parelli lifestyles.

Jen and I both want to challenge you to think of ways you can help a child grow in his or her horsemanship, because we all know how much that develops one’s self-confidence, leadership skills, relationship skills, communication and personal development. As for our play day, we accomplished everything we set out to do by establishing friendships in a new Parelli Kids group in the community, staying safe and having fun! 🐾

Top Eleven Tips for a Successful Parelli Kids Play Day

1. Safety first! Bring a horse that is appropriate for the child to be safe with. If a horse is acting right-brain, put that horse in a stall so everyone can have fun and be safe. This is not about working out problem horses!
2. Have an activity outline for your day fully planned and make simulations a big part of that.
3. Allow the horses to settle in at the barn and use some non-horse getting-to-know-you icebreakers.
4. Stop for snacks and rest in the middle!
5. Play the Seven Games with people first by experimenting with conga horse—a super simulation technique!
6. Keep the day short, only one to three hours.
7. Make sure that you have at least one adult helper per child. This is critical.
8. Give plenty of time for everyone to unload and get prepared.
9. Group kids together by levels and skills.
10. Good Parelli Parent role models lead to great Parelli Kids.
11. This should be obvious, but make sure the event is run by a qualified Parelli Professional who has the passion and training to set it up for success.

I think it’s much easier for adults to find friendships and support with other Parelli students and professionals. We wanted to provide a fun and safe environment for the kids to be able to do the same. The Parelli Kids play day turned out to be the perfect opportunity to create that environment. Jesse and Jen did a superb job planning the event and being “in the moment” enough to make sure the kids and the horses walked away feeling great and wanting more.—Nancy Smorch (nancysmorch@mac.com)

The structure was casual, and Jesse was able to bring the kids out of their shells. It was similar to the way things were structured in the courses—games and simulations with the kids without horses, then play and experimentation with. Very smooth plan.

Having the two of us there worked out very well, as Jesse could coordinate the big picture and I would go around and help him with the obstacles and give individual help to anyone who became hung up on anything. Overall, the day was a huge success, with play days among the kids planned for the future. What a great way to get young people together and not only challenge their horsemanship, but encourage supportive natural play.—Jen Hall

The Extern Experience

Pat describes the 12-week Extern Program as “an opportunity to qualify for the Mastery Program.”

To shed some light on this step in the Parelli Professional journey we asked three former Externs for their thoughts on the Extern experience.

Why did you decide to experience an Externship?

Stephanie Gaunt: I wanted to have the opportunity to spend time at Pat’s barn being immersed in savvy. I also wanted the chance to qualify for the Mastery Program, giving me the opportunity to eventually become a 3-Star or higher Parelli Professional.

Zoe Williams: As soon as I discovered Parelli two years ago, I knew I wanted to become a Licensed Parelli Professional and to be the best me that I can be. In my mind, that was always going to be about spending as much time as possible studying at the source. I want to become a Master Instructor, and the Externship is the most direct route to the Mastery Program.

Paula Riella: I’ve dreamt of becoming a professional for some time and was really excited when I found out that a new formalized professional route had been developed by Parelli! I decided to apply for the Externship because I wanted the opportunity to become a Master Instructor. Also, by spending three months at the “source of knowledge” I knew I would accelerate my learning and have an unforgettable experience!

In what ways was the Extern Program what you expected? In what ways was it not?

Steph: The externship was long hours and hard work, which I expected. There were plenty of laughs and fun along the way, too! I did not expect the amount of personal growth that I would experience; I am definitely a more well-rounded person now.

Zoe: I didn’t really have expectations of the Externship, other than knowing that it would really test me mentally, emotionally and physically. Before the fact, it is hard to imagine how that will manifest itself. I learned so much, and most of it was stuff that I would never have imagined I would learn. The biggest “aha” moment for me was realizing that every task or test, no matter how unrelated it seemed, had huge relevance to horsemanship.

Can you describe a typical day in your life as an Extern?

Zoe: There are no typical days. The greatest thing about the Extern Program is that no two days are the same. It really teaches you to be flexible and adapt to fit the situation. The Externs are divided into four quadrants that rotate around the Four Business Savvys of Parelli: Horsemanship, Admin, Facility Design and Maintenance and Teaching. We would usually start at 7:30 a.m. in our quadrant and work until 4:00 p.m., with a lunch break. We would then usually have a two-hour horsemanship session with Faculty Team Leader John Baar.

Paula: I was lucky enough to experience my Externship in both Colorado and Florida. I was also part of the team that transported the horses to Texas for the Fort Worth Celebration. So a typical day varied depending on where I was! As an Extern I was also given the opportunity to experience each of the Four Business Savvys. One week I might be assisting John and Kathy Baar on faculty, the next helping to groom and prepare Pat’s horses or maintaining the ranch and working on projects to realize Pat’s vision, or even helping students with any administrative or logistical requirements. So there was never a dull moment!

How will you be different as a result of your Externship?

Steph: I think I have developed my emotional and mental fitness, and this has enabled me to take my horsemanship to



Zoe Williams



a higher level. Also, paying more attention and being more particular in everyday tasks such as catching and haltering and understanding how this impacts everything you do with a horse. After spending that amount of time at the ranch I have started to develop good habits that I want to keep!

Paula: During my Externship I was able to experience first-hand Linda and Pat's philosophy, mission and vision. In each Business Savvy I now think: "What would Pat want?" Since my Externship I have become much more progressive and particular when developing myself and horses. I also have a clearer understanding about how to inspire, empower and educate when teaching. This is thanks to the knowledge I gained and the invaluable time spent with John and Kathy during both horsemanship time and when assisting them.

What is something that happened or something you learned that you will never forget?

Zoe: I will never forget the journey from Colorado to Florida; it was a great learning opportunity and one of the biggest highlights of my Externship. I experienced so many different emotions on that trip and learned a lot about myself while being part of a great team.

Paula: My lesson with Linda during the Florida Gold Savvy Summit was a dream come true. Linda helped me make the transition in my riding posture from FreeStyle to riding with Finesse, and it had an amazing effect on me and my fantastic lease horse, Bandit! I also will never forget all of the wonderful people I met during my Externship, each of whom were an important part of my experience and added to my journey.

What are your plans/goals for the future?

Steph: I am planning to come back in 2010 to start in the Mastery Program as an Intern. Eventually I hope to get to be a 4-Star Parelli Professional so that I can teach all Four Savvys and make an impact in the competitive dressage world.

Zoe: I am now back in the U.K. and have just begun teaching as a 1-Star Parelli Professional. I plan to return to Colorado in August 2010 to begin my Internship. In the meantime I would like to gain as much experience as possible teaching, and I plan to concentrate on my own horsemanship with my horse at home.

Paula: I absolutely love teaching, and my aim is to become the best teacher for my students and horseman for my horses that I can be. My plan is to continue my development, achieve my second star in 2010 and eventually become a Master Instructor. 🌟

Junior Savvy

Fun with Poles

Make sure to use your imagination to come up with new tasks to challenge yourself and your horse with! To get you started, here are two challenges you can try with just a handful of poles set up in a zig-zag.



1

Can you send your pony forward through the zig-zag?



2

Watch that his feet stay inside the poles!



3

Use your Driving Game to turn him away from you and reward him for a job well done!



4

What about driving him through the zig-zag backwards?



5

Slow down and think about what to do next.



6

Adjust your position to fit the situation!

The actual sounds made by a newborn baby are about survival needs



courtesy photo

...and are expressive of the mitochondrial states. Babies convey 5 such sounds (and more) about...

1. Sleep;
2. Body temperature (wet/hot-cold);
3. Hunger/thirst;
4. Digestion: upper gas; and,
5. Digestion: lower gas.

Even newborns can convey an awareness of what is happening in their bodies. Actually, babies give up trying to communicate because most do not listen to what they are saying.

"I felt so much more confident that I could meet his needs when he was communicating them to me. It empowers you to be the best parent you can be." —Catherine McNiel, mother of Asher – 5 weeks.

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The Parelli Center



Australia Parelli Center by Sharon Betts

I have just arrived home from the four-week Master-class at Wilton, Australia. Wow! What an experience! The learning curves were steep at times, but most of us stepped out of our comfort zones and into the learning zone readily. We were ready to step up for our horses! As expected, the instructors were amazing. They were professional, energetic and inspiring, and the structure they had us follow set us up for success at every turn.

Some of the things we learned:

- How to use the strategy of isolate, separate and recombine in order to diagnose and solve problems.
- The value of having a plan, and how to create an effective plan to achieve our goals.
- To always remember that the horse controls the timeline.
- How to be more particular without being critical.

Australia



The human simulations were really educational, with one interesting and fun Horsenality™ or another showing up at times. We used the seat builders regularly to learn body dynamics and techniques before experimenting with our horses (I am sure that the horses were thankful for that!). The students in the course were also fantastic. The commitment and determination required by most people to even get to Sydney was phenomenal! Some students drove for four days across Australia, in excess of 7000 kilometers, with the fuel bill being around \$3000, and that was for just one way! One student even flew in from the U.K. How awesome is that? These are the kinds of dedicated, committed people that I love to be around.

Every day I would look around at the 22+ students and horses and marvel at the sight. Happy, smiling faces and happy,

contented horses doing the best they could in a positive and progressive environment. The magical relationships between the horses and humans were obvious, and my own relationship with my horse grew enormously. I was so blessed to have this opportunity. Thank you, Pat, Linda and all the team who made it possible for this to come into my life!

P.S.—In my spare time I drew some cartoons for the instructors' entertainment. 🐾

To see a list of all course dates turn the page.

Book Your Transformation!

www.parelli.com or call your local office.

2010 COURSES



Florida

2-Week Courses:

Horse Behavior and YOU	Feb 14-26
Level 2 BREAKTHRU	Mar 14-26, November 14-26
Confidence TRANSFORMATION	Apr 11-23
Savvy "FINESSE"	Nov 28-Dec. 10

4-Week Courses:

Fast-Track	Feb 1-26, Mar. 1-26, Mar 29-Apr. 23, Nov. 1-26
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Australia

2-Week Courses:

Level 2 BREAKTHRU	Mar 1-12
Savvy "FINESSE"	Mar 15-26
Horse Behavior and YOU	Oct 4-15
Confidence TRANSFORMATION	Oct 18-29



Colorado

2-Week Courses:

Horse Behavior and YOU	Jun 13-25
Level 2 BREAKTHRU	Jul 11-23
Confidence TRANSFORMATION	Aug 8-20
Savvy "FINESSE"	Aug 22-Sept 3

4-Week Courses:

Fast-Track	May 31-Jun 25, Jun 28-Jul 23, Aug 2-27, Aug 30-Sept 24
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United Kingdom

2-Week Courses:

Horse Behavior and YOU	May 10-21
Level 2 BREAKTHRU	May 24-Jun 4, Jul 19-30
Confidence TRANSFORMATION	Jun 7-18
Savvy "FINESSE"	Jun 21-Jul 2, Aug 2-13



What People Are Saying...

I am on way back from two weeks at the Parelli Centre at Wilton in Australia. It was my first time at the Centre. I wanted to let you know what a wonderful job your team did at running the courses. They were very organised, genuinely interested in helping us and our horses and consistent in their messages. —Leonie S., NSW, Australia

We just completed two weeks of learning at the Colorado center. The courses we're well worth our time (and money) and we feel the relationship we have with our horses improved significantly during the course. Your entire setup is outstanding and your staff is excellent. We would like to especially thank Julia and Avery (our instructors) and compliment their teaching and horsemanship skills. —John and Reggie F.

"As I reflected back on my course over the weekend, I suddenly realised the power of learning with a group of likeminded people. The simplicity of Pat's program was so evident as it was delivered by our team of international instructors all speaking in one universal language of Love, Language, and Leadership. I will forever remember the 'power of neutral' and to 'expect a lot, accept a little, and reward often.'" —Tony G., Warwickshire

The Power of One Horse

by Norma Vela

Many of us can say that one horse has affected us more than any other. Sherlock was that horse for Terry Burns—the reason she sought out Parelli, the catalyst for a renewed relationship with her mother and finally her inspiration for a new career.

"I was eleven years old and absolutely horse crazy," shares Terry, "when my parents enabled me to realize my passion. They bought me a horse." Terry considered this gift beyond remarkable because her mother was afraid—"No, she was terrified of horses!" Yet they chose to support their daughter's passion—a passion that didn't diminish as Terry explored many equestrian disciplines, including competitive dressage, a career as a mounted police officer and now her study of Parelli.

Sherlock was a former racehorse rescued from an abusive home. Terry was the officer in charge of training for her police department's mounted patrol when Sherlock was donated as a prospect. She quickly discovered that "Our 'normal' police

horse training methods were not working with him, and I had to find a new way or one of us would have been seriously hurt." When she had an opportunity to see Pat Parelli at a Parelli event—"Well, actually, I *made* myself an opportunity," she admits—she decided within the first 15 minutes that Pat had something to teach her. "Two weeks later Sherlock and I were in a Dave Ellis clinic, and I was hooked.

"Sherlock was hypersensitive, with serious trust and confidence issues," she explains. "When he wasn't trying to get away from people like the vet or farrier, he was threatening them." As she played with Sherlock through the program, Terry recalls, "He seemed to realize that things were going to be different.





Terry and her mom at the Florida Center

He became more trusting and respectful. Although he was still very sensitive and impulsive, that became less a negative than a positive attribute." And people noticed, says Terry. "I began to hear comments from the vets, farrier, other trainers and officers about the transformation that had occurred. He had become easy to work on and around."

Sherlock's transformation got the other officers curious, and Terry started to receive questions about "this *stuff* I was doing with the horses." Soon the other officers were studying Parelli along with Terry. "During Field Force [riot control] training with other mounted units we prepared our horses by playing with them on the ground, then rode in our hackamores. Our horses were calm and well-behaved while other horses that were ridden with severe bits were unable to calmly handle the stress of the ultimate predator behavior." During this training officers in black riot gear marched toward the crowd of "bad guys" while banging cadence on protective shields. The "bad guys" yelled,

waved signs and threw plastic bottles at the officers. Horses were expected to remain calm and attentive throughout this "riot."

Sherlock's ripples of influence expanded when his previous owner watched with amazement as Terry took Sherlock through his first parade. She was so impressed with the changes she saw in him that she immediately approached Terry for help. "Jean had a big, young, gorgeous Quarter horse that didn't respect her space at all. After I showed her the power of a single wiggling finger she just had to know more. That very day she changed how she interacted with all of her horses."

When Sherlock's police career was ended by a leg injury, Terry brought him with her to Tennessee for retirement. As Terry worked toward her Level 3 her mother would watch, fascinated. Terry admits that her relationship with her mother had not been as steady as she would have liked, and through the years they had even become a little distant. Yet, "In the

spirit of 'Move Closer Stay Longer,'" Terry recalls, "Mom began to help me with barn chores such as feeding and turning out the compliant, low-energy horses." Terry slowly introduced the Principle Games—Friendly, Porcupine and Driving—to help her mother stay safe and keep the horses out of her space. "Remember, she had a lifetime fear of horses!" says Terry. As the games made her mother feel more confident and empowered she was drawn in by their beauty and gentle nature. "In a very short time my mother declared that she was no longer afraid of horses. She began to play with my Levels horse and groom others in the barn. She no longer had to admire horses from afar. More important, we now had something we could enjoy together, so our relationship improved.

"Often people begin to study Parelli and think, 'Oh, I've got to apologize to my horse!' for how they used to be. I had the

opportunity to reacquire my former dressage partner, now a 26-year-old. I was able to 'apologize' by giving him a more natural life, but getting him back also meant that I could give my mother the gift she gave me as a child—an equine partner to begin her horsemanship journey with."

Sadly, Sherlock was reinjured and euthanized a few years ago, but his influence continues. Terry passed her Level 3 with her new equine partner, Roy. "And Mom was right there with me to share it," she says. "And the woman who was terrified of horses has her red string and is confidently studying Level 2 with a 17-hand Warmblood!" Terry is in Pat's Extern program with the goal of becoming a 2-Star Parelli Professional and helping other people discover the joy of a truly intimate relationship with horses. "Now I'm really living my dream!" she says. Sherlock would be proud. 🐾



photo by Coco

It walks me down memory lane...

The Parelli system was recommended to my boarding facility when one of our boarders had a "horse problem" we couldn't solve. The Parelli videos introduced us to a whole new world of horsemanship. What we didn't know at the time was how Parelli would change our minds, our hearts and our horses.

Our barn has become a place where horses are allowed to be natural and whole. Their true spirit shines like a light directing us who were once in the dark when it came to horses. The boarders used to be individual horse people working alone with their horses in secret frustration. Now we are a family of Parelli students learning and growing together. We help one another and share the joy of the newfound horse language. This level of horsemanship has even enabled my mother, who is in her sixties, to begin her horse journey.

Working through the Levels Program provides me with daily direction to move forward with my horse. Each step is a journey in itself, and I can't even explain the joy I feel when my horse understands what I'm asking and responds with eagerness.

My Parelli journey is becoming a wonderful chapter in my life book, and I want to keep the journey alive. I contacted Ginny Sue and was excited to learn that she is not just an artist but is extremely passionate and understands how Parelli training takes your horse and connects him directly to your heart. Ginny Sue captured my story and molded it into a beautiful frame that will provide me with memories forever.

Each time I look at my Parelli Award by Ginny Sue it walks me down memory lane, and I feel the joy of each step and all the people with whom I shared that chapter. —Karen W., Leroy, Illinois



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Teresa's Six Pack

by Norma Vela

Teresa has had horses all her life and felt pretty confident about what she knew. "I got my first pony at eight," she says with a grin, adding, "As far as I was concerned, I didn't have horse problems." Still, when a friend showed her a postcard advertising a nearby Parelli clinic, Teresa was drawn by it. "My husband and I had a little time off that weekend, and this was something 'horsey' we could do together."

She had no expectation that within an hour her life would take a new direction. "I was hooked," she says. "That was it. I knew this program was what I had to do." She stayed to audit all four days of the clinic and signed up to audit all the remaining clinics that year.

During the winter of 2004 she studied a borrowed Level 1 kit, bought her equipment and started playing with her horses. By May she asked for a private lesson with Parelli Professional Don Halladay, "just to get an idea of what I was doing right or wrong. Maybe he could offer more specific feedback." Don was so impressed that by the end of the lesson he awarded Teresa

her Level 1. The next season Teresa audited every day that Don taught in her area.

Even her generally non-horsey husband was inspired to join her. "Parelli has been a way for him to learn," she says, "and we can play together." But when they had to put down their 26-year-old horse and Teresa realized her levels partner was 19, she began to consider expanding their herd. "I toyed with the idea of getting a youngster," she recalls. On the internet she ran into a story with snapshots of 125 young horses (one to three years old) being fattened that within weeks would be headed to slaughter. "I've always known about the slaughter





industry—there used to be a slaughterhouse 40 minutes from here—but there was nothing I could do about it, and emotionally I turned a blind eye to it. I was finally in a position to do something. I could save one, I thought. I could save one...or maybe two."

As she scanned the photographs of all 125 horses, she recalls, "My *short* list was 29!" Teresa finally settled on taking in four horses. Two were yearlings. "I picked a colt I thought would replace my Levels horse," she says, "and we took a yearling filly for my friend." The other two were older fillies. Teresa says, "I realized I could save two lives for one if I took the older fillies, since they were running with colts and could be pregnant." The Pegasus Foundation had found a man who would trailer eleven horses if they could fill the trailer. At the last minute someone who had agreed to take three horses backed out. Teresa got a phone call. Could she take three more? The clock was ticking on their lives—fill the trailer or they go to slaughter. "Suddenly I went from maybe two young horses to seven. And we weren't set up for youngsters. Plus three of the four were likely pregnant mares," Teresa says. "This is where my husband is the hero of this story. He let me take money out of

our savings for the rescue. And we put seven horses on that trailer."

As the horses headed to their new home Teresa and her husband had to get busy. They had to build shelters, put in new fencing and redesign their pasture to accommodate colts, mares and foals. "We'd only had four old geldings here forever."

Every one of the horses was sick when they arrived and as wild as could be. They had barely been touched in their lives, and Teresa couldn't get closer to them than fifty feet, "because fifty feet was the middle of the barnyard, and when we would cross the halfway point they would stampede in a herd around behind us to the farthest point again." The seventh horse went to Teresa's friend, and friends on the Savvy Club forum quickly dubbed the remaining horses "the six-pack." Weeks of undemanding time and patience began to pay off. Tiny baby steps were coming—first touches, first rubs. "One of the hardest things in gaining their trust was finding the balance between being in close proximity and staying safe when they had their herd spooks and stampedes, which initially happened half a dozen times a day. I look at photos from those first weeks, and I can see in their faces. They want to come to me, but they just can't."

Teresa and her herd spent a lot of time hanging out, lying around and just breathing the same air. "I had to stay patient and 'take the time' even when matters seemed urgent, like a head gash, or fighting my urge to trim their sadly deformed feet. But the 'isms' rolled through my head constantly: 'Take the time it takes,' 'Slow and right beats fast and wrong.' Those words were my mantra." Soon the herd began to trust, and Teresa graduated to halters. The horses were safe and finally beginning to understand what that felt like.

"I knew it was going to be expensive and frustrating to take them all in. I knew there would be times when I would ask myself what on earth had I been thinking. I didn't do this to get more horses; we did this for a bigger reason: to save lives."

Spring arrived, and so did "Remember," followed quickly by "Celebration." Teresa took special care naming each of the horses. "I knew it was going to be expensive and frustrating to take them all in. I knew there would be times when I would ask myself what on earth had I been thinking. I didn't do this to get more horses; I did this for a bigger reason: to save lives." Teresa picked names to symbolize that long, hard road. Because she had no clue of breeding dates, she couldn't make plans that involved leaving town—for example, to attend the Parelli Celebration she had looked forward to for a year. "I was feeling a little sorry for myself that I couldn't go. November foaled the weekend of the Celebration, so the name I had picked was even more fitting: This baby was my 'Celebration.' And she has stolen my heart."

The horse named "Eleven" was never even on Teresa's short list, but in the eleventh-hour negotiation when Teresa agreed to take the extra horses, the little mare made it onto the truck to complete the required load of eleven that arrived on November 11. "She's the most laid-back of them all and as the biggest will be my husband's riding horse, so she's here for life."

"Islands" was named for the pattern of his coat. "Archie" is a charming redhead. "Nell" is the wild, unsocialized child from the Jodie Foster film. "Nutmeg" has that same rich coloring and, as the smallest of the herd, goes by "Meg." "November" is the black and white, named for the anniversary.

Both mares that foaled successfully were confident allowing Teresa to handle their

babies. "As a matter of fact, Nova was going to foal in a part of the field I didn't prefer and followed me at liberty to a different area."

The extra gift Teresa realized has been time spent with her daughter, who had never had much of a passion for horses. "When the horses came, my daughter asked if I would let her work with one of the horses and study Parelli. I said, 'Well, sure!' Of course, the horse she fell in love with is the colt I had picked to be my Levels replacement." Teresa's daughter submitted and passed her Level 1 assessment in April 2009, less than six months after the horses arrived.

On the first anniversary, Teresa's daughter got on her colt's back for the first time, and she has quickly progressed to saddling and riding. "She needs to stay on top of keeping his respect, but he clearly trusts her. They have a great relationship,, which is something I never would have had without Parelli. I think now, 'I hope I can be good enough for these horses.' I never would've thought that way. Before I would've put more responsibility on the horse if something went wrong. Now I feel it's mine.

"I want people to know that there are so many horses that need homes, that go to death for the want of a home, and that these are good, sweet horses. There's no reason for them to be discarded. These were all babies. Save a life if you can. Just because a horse is being discarded by someone doesn't mean that it can't be a good horse for someone else."

Teresa's journey continues, and you can follow along on the Savvy Club forum under "General Chat: Our Odyssey." 🐾



*"I only use and recommend
professional grade because
horsemanship is my art."
—Pat Parelli*



I began making my own "natural" equipment in the early 1980s because most horse-training gear is designed for restraint and force rather than teaching. It promotes predatory, hard, quick hands—the opposite of what a sensitive prey animal needs.

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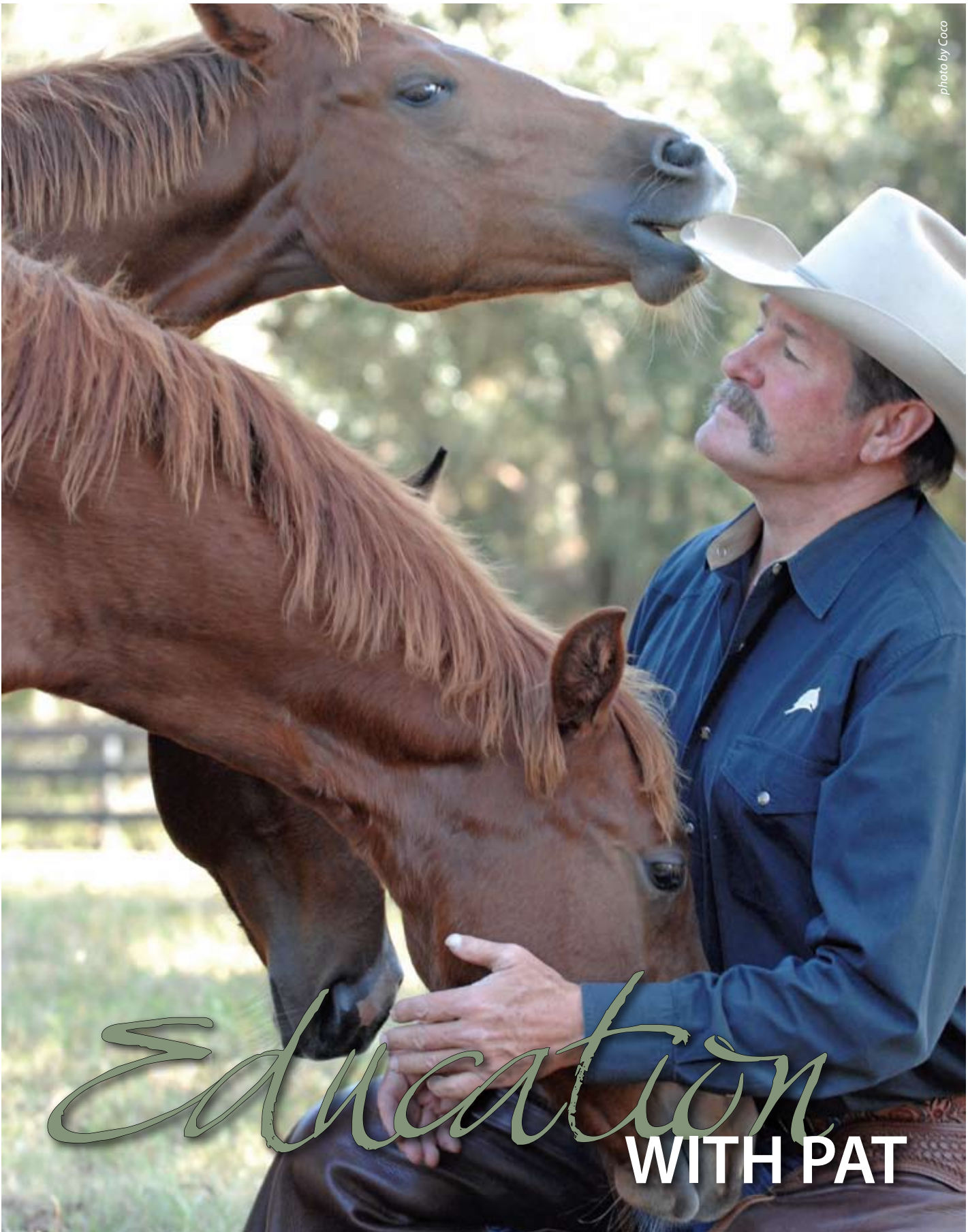
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Professional Grade

photo by Coco

A man with a mustache, wearing a white cowboy hat and a dark blue long-sleeved shirt, is shown in profile, looking up at a brown horse. He is gently holding the head of a smaller brown horse in front of him. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with trees and a fence. The title 'Education WITH PAT' is overlaid at the bottom in a green script and white sans-serif font.

Education WITH PAT

Driving Horses Naturally

Lessons from the Mastery Program

According to Pat Parelli, “There is something you will learn about horses that is available only by putting two reins in your hands, going behind one or more horses and doing a real job.”

by Sarah Espinoza-Sokal and Jamie Evans

It's no wonder that Pat puts great emphasis on his Mastery Program students working alongside driving horses to accomplish daily chores around the Parelli Centers in Colorado and Florida. As an Extern this summer I was privileged to spend a week with Pat's draft team, Thunder and Lightning. But for more insight on driving horses naturally, I interviewed Parelli Intern Jamie Evans on his extensive experience.

Driving and the Mastery Program

Before becoming an Extern in January 2009 Jamie had absolutely no driving experience. He began his driving education by helping to harness and play with the team on the ground every day for about a month and a half. “I never actually said

to Pat, ‘I want to learn how to drive,’” Jamie says, “but every time I saw him with the draft horses I was right there.” About a month after coming to Colorado for the summer Jamie spent two weeks with the team, learning directly from Pat, and then Pat gave him the go-ahead to drive on his own. After that it was about putting the time in: “I drove the team on my own eight hours a day, pretty much every day. The horses were out of their pastures for at least 12 hours a day, either working or tied to the hitching rail. Anything that happened with them—whether it was driving, harnessing, unharnessing, taking them to the water trough, whatever—I was involved.”

When the position of Driving Foreman was created within the Mastery Program, Jamie was a natural choice to take the



job. As he describes it, the Driving Foreman is responsible for everything related to driving: making sure that all harnesses, carriages and wagons are properly looked after and that all the driving horses are developing as they should. “Even if you’re not the one driving them,” Jamie says, “you’re just checking on them to make sure they’re not getting grouchy, that they’re doing their turns properly, things like that.” The position now changes hands often, allowing any Mastery Student who is interested to learn these responsibilities.

The Driving Foreman has become increasingly important as the scope of the Driving Program has grown. In Colorado last summer, the team provided the primary opportunity for driving experience, but Pat’s vision of training more of his super horses to drive has since become a reality. Horses like Maile, Especial, Aspen and Vanna have all at least begun their driving prep, and the Mastery students now have a handful of single horses to choose from. As usual, Pat has put these principles to purpose: “Almost anything that can be done with a golf cart can now be done with a single driving horse instead.”

With the single horses taking the place of golf carts and Thunder and Lightning doing the work of a flatbed truck and a tractor combined, Mastery students have an abundance of opportunities to learn driving through a variety of practical applications. The team helps to harrow arenas, distribute hay on a daily basis and transport equipment around the ranch. In Colorado last summer, the team helped to pick up and store hundreds of bales of new hay in addition to pulling the manure spreaders several times a day. They often did their first run with the spreader before the sun was fully up and their last as it was going down. These are two hard-working horses who enjoy their jobs!

Why Drive?

Driving can be enormously beneficial in many ways for both horses and humans. Jamie notes that driving can be a great way to help a horse have a positive, willing attitude—particularly a Left-Brain Introvert like Especial. “They’re not in the arena, and you’re just saying, ‘Let’s go!’ It’s like a big point-to-point or trail ride, and they get to really enjoy it.”

The other major benefit of teaching a riding horse to drive is muscular development; driving can really help a horse learn to power through its top line. Lauren Barwick’s Olympic partner, Maile, has been an excellent example of this. Jamie recalls seeing her back rise several inches when she first relaxed into her work in harness, and her movement under saddle has improved noticeably as a result. Jamie adds, “When driving, there is no weight on their back to obstruct them, but they still have



to work. Even pulling a carriage at a walk can be quite hard for them, depending on how much weight they’ve got, so they learn to use their whole top line to optimize their power.”

For the human, driving offers a unique perspective on horsemanship that is invaluable to those who aim to become true horsemen. Jamie started Parelli when he was twelve years old and had no prior riding experience, so he says with a laugh, “I learned one-rein riding back in the old levels, and it never occurred to me that you could hold both reins at the same time. When I came to the Parelli Center, I struggled with the concept of using two reins, but when you drive, the reins are all you have. Driving really helped me learn how to hold the reins and how to have a good feel.”

Another plus of playing with drafts horses is learning the value of being particular. Jamie uses bridling as an example: “Thunder is 18.1hh, and Lightning is 17.2hh. Thunder’s head is actually bigger than my whole torso, and his nose is much larger than my whole hand. When you’re bridling something that big you have to be really particular about getting that head right down and getting them to really accept the bit. Whether that takes a cookie in your hand or molasses, in our team’s case, it is so important to do this right every day and to make it pleasant for them. When a draft horse who doesn’t want to take his bit puts his head up, you’ve got no chance.”

Jamie adds that one of the best reasons to drive is that “it’s so much fun.” As a Left-Brain Extrovert, Jamie loves the challenge. “I try to find the tightest, most difficult little maneuver that I can do, and it never ceases to amaze me how much you can do with those two horses.”

“There’s nothing quite like the feeling of the team working and trying for you,” Jamie says. Once last summer the team was loaded with about three tons of hay. They were climbing a small hill and just making it when Jamie had to stop and back them up because a bale got caught in the machine that lifts bales onto the wagon. Because they had lost their momentum, getting going again was a real challenge. Jamie says, “When I

first asked them forward, because Lightning is the extrovert, she went right forward, bounced into her harness and then fell right back because the wagon was so heavy. The second time I asked, Thunder stepped forward, and Lightning hung back because she'd kind of had the try knocked out of her. Thunder kept trying to push on his own, and he literally slipped back on all four feet in the dry, hard Colorado dirt.

"The final time I asked them to go forward, they both took a step at exactly the same time, with the left front foot, I remember, and then the right hind, and all their power came through at once. I've never felt the wagon move so slowly, but we did get up that hill, and we stacked all that hay. It was an incredible feeling because the amount of effort the pair of them put into getting up that hill together was *huge*."

A Parelli Foundation

A Parelli foundation is a great place to begin for both horses and humans that are new to driving. A horse should be developed at least to Level 3, and preferably Level 4 On Line, before starting his driving education. "Horses like Especial and Maile," Jamie comments, "who are both beyond Level 3 in all Four Savvys, are just so easy. They got it straightaway." What makes the difference? Jamie explains that it's their understanding of how to appropriately respond to pressure and their confidence. Both Especial and Maile required less than a week of driving prep before they were ready to hitch up and go.

For humans, understanding of the Parelli principles is very helpful. Teaching a horse to drive is a lot about teaching about pressure, and knowing how to effectively apply horse psychology is critical. For example, the horse must learn to be light

on the reins but be willing to push into pressure on the chest collar and britching (the piece of the harness that runs behind the horse's butt, so that when the horses slow, the wagon slows, too). Jamie says, "They need to learn that when they feel the pressure on their butts they should slow down, when it's on their chest they should pull harder. Sometimes—if they're standing on a hill, for example—they have to just hold it." Helping a horse learn to push into or hold pressure is not so different from teaching him to yield, *if* you understand that it's the release that teaches.

In the Mastery Program students use simulations to prepare horses for driving, starting with lots and lots of Zone 5 driving. Next comes teaching them to pull into the chest collar while leading them forward, followed by combining the first two steps. Jamie explains, "You'd have one person pulling on the traces (attached to the chest collar) and one person driving, both in Zone 5, but definitely out of the kick zone. It's like the person pulling is a negative pressure, and the person driving forward is a positive, and you test to make sure that positive is more powerful than negative so that the horse goes forward into the harness when asked." Beyond that, it is important that a horse get accustomed to the sight, sound and feel of driving before being secured to a carriage for the first time. The Parelli approach involves checking these things out in a series of small steps and taking the time it takes. A little imagination goes a long way in helping to set things up for success.

Parelli students also have an advantage when it comes to understanding Horsenality™ and reading the horse. When driving, Jamie watches a horse's ears, head carriage and tension in the tail for signs that the horse is getting nervous and might need to stop or retreat. As an example, Jamie talks about Thunder and Lightning, who came to Pat's barn after already having had a few wrecks in harness. As a result, Jamie explains, "When we first started driving them they were quite nervous. You'd watch Lightning to see how nervous Thunder was. Lightning being a Right-Brain Extrovert, she'd be prancing back and forth and going, 'I'm nervous, I'm nervous, I'm nervous,' and Thunder, the Right-Brain Introvert, wouldn't be moving at all, but that didn't mean he was okay." Paying attention to Lightning helped Jamie to avoid pushing Thunder through his thresholds. This was critical because when a horse the size of Thunder pops, you're in big trouble. Although neither Thunder nor Lightning represent an ideal Horsenality™ for driving, and some might have just given up on them, savvy handling and patience have helped them to become more and more confident and Left-Brain, and they continue to improve all the time. It just goes to show (again) that Parelli is way more than riding. 🐾

Another crucial element of Pat Parelli's Driving Program is Nate Bowers of Bowers Natural Driving. Nate, the son of the late Steve Bowers—a true master of natural driving—impressed Pat greatly with his ability to carry on his father's work, and he visits the Parelli Center often to share his wisdom. Jamie comments, "Nate was incredibly helpful when we were getting the team re-started. He also helps us with harness fit and maintenance—things that might seem little but are really important for the comfort and safety of our horses." Pat and Linda have named Nate and the Bowers program as the recommended driving resource for Parelli students. For more information on Bowers Natural Driving, visit www.bowersfarm.com.



I bought my Cradle bridle with C3 bit at the British Open at the NEC earlier this year for my 17-year-old Left-Brain Introvert mare, Doris.

The Cradle Bridle has helped enormously, and she seems very settled, happy and fluid in her movement.

I have partnered Doris for nearly a decade, and we have been through a lot together. I have done a fair amount of dressage/Finesse work with her but never felt comfortable with any of the bits we tried. Truth be told, she is far happier in her hackamore, and I use a bit only when asking for collection. I have tried happy mouths, KK Ultra bits, French Links and various types of loose ring snaffles, but she never seemed settled in the mouth and would often snatch and be argumentative when I asked for contact. The Cradle Bridle has helped enormously, and she seems very settled, happy and fluid in her movement. —Samantha

For more information visit www.parelli.com

Cradle Bridle

Pat's Journey

Optimizing Magic's Life by Pat Parelli

About two and a half years ago I started to have the time, the facilities and the cattle necessary to give my horses a proper foundation in cow-working. I quickly found out that Magic, even though she's not bred to be a cutting horse, had a certain amount of propensity for it, so I started following it forward.

At first it was just to give her something to do to build on her foundation—a cross-training sort of thing—but I soon realized that she had enough talent to potentially be somewhat competitive. The only things that were really holding her back were her age and her training, so I really decided to go for it, and Magic and I competed in our first cuttings in 2008.

Since then I've taken her to about a dozen competitions in Florida, New Mexico and Colorado. We mostly compete in the Open classes, and Magic has been consistently marking scores of 72 and 73. (In cutting, scores range from 60 to 80.) In 2009 she performed well enough to qualify for Eastern Nationals. Keep in mind that the average age of horses in these compe-

titions is about six, and Magic is 19 this year, so that's pretty unusual. You should also know that in the sport of cutting you can mark a 73, but if you get a penalty point, your final score is 72. Usually when we're done I can say that we did awfully good—I did awful and she did good. Magic does all the good stuff, and I earn us the penalties!

Magic's success at her age may seem unusual to some, but when you focus on foundation before specialization, having horses as companions for life and optimizing the horse's life... well, success is a natural result of that. I can always count on Magic's good foundation. Foundation, to me, is a minimum of Level 4 in all Four Savvys, and Magic is much higher than that



photo by Coco

now. She gets played with and ridden five to seven times a week, and playing in all Four Savvys, besides being an all-around education, is a great program for general fitness. Magic is much fitter than most horses half her age, simply because we do a variety of things with her on an almost daily basis.

To give her a solid foundation in cow-work, I follow a purpose-driven program. Instead of just practicing the moves you'd need in the cutting pen, I break things down and give her real jobs to do. For example, cutting is a three-phase thing. It goes: *I select, we drive, and then you hold the cow.* So I might go out in a field with the cattle and practice those three stages so that, instead of a 100'-wide cutting pen, Magic has a field that could be as much as half a mile wide, and she's really got to use her strategies to hold the cow. One thing I often tell people is that I don't train my horses; I get my horses to help me train the cows. That's what I'm constantly doing—training the cows to go where I want them, stand where I want them or allow me to separate them. When the horse starts to understand that, it really gives her purpose, which then gives everything meaning.

As you and the horse grow together, there's a special bond that develops, and you'll begin to feel that the horse is starting to think, "I get it. I understand the purpose, therefore I understand the meaning of life."

Horses, like people, often wonder about the meaning of their lives. If you go about things the right way by having goals but allowing the horse to be in charge of the principles and the timelines, you can really help to optimize that horse's life—to help the horse feel like the luckiest horse alive. As you and the horse grow together, there's a special bond that develops, and you'll begin to feel that the horse is starting to think, "I get it. I understand the purpose, therefore I understand the meaning of life." I'm always looking for ways to optimize a horse's life, and that is what's really important about Magic's progres-



Photo by Coco

sion—continuing to optimize things for her. Her competitive success is just the icing on the cake.

Magic is such a special horse—there are very few horses that have as much capacity and scope and spirit as she does. She was nine years old when I first got her, and she was racehorse fast and could jump like a deer. Dressage moves came easy for her, she could do reining maneuvers and anything with a cow was natural to her. What interested me the most in her was her ability to do so many things; but she also came with a lot of baggage. She'd already been through four professional trainers who had said she wasn't worth feeding anymore. She never forgets that, but she often forgives me for everybody else's sins against her—and that makes her really special, too. She keeps on trying and keeps on learning, and I keep on doing my best to give her life a meaning that is worthy of her.

I consider Magic to be in semi-retirement now, and what I would really like for her at this point is to stay sound and fit and help me to exercise Principle 7: humans teach horses, horses teach humans. She's already starting to be a mentor for my up-and-coming students. Some of my top Protégés—Emily Thompson, for example—have been riding Magic in lessons with Walter Zettl, and I've had a few of my Mastery Program students actually ride her in cutting practice. As long as she's interested in going to cuttings, I'll keep taking her to a few, and I'd really like to see some of my Protégés cut their teeth in the competition arena on her. From partner to performer, competitor to teacher, Magic continues to live the kind of full life that would make any horse jealous. 🐾

Peppy's Journey

The Making of a Super Horse

by Pat Parelli

In 2010 I want to give you an inside look at the development of a super horse. With the help of my Mastery Program students, I am currently developing a few dozen horses, and I chose a very special stallion to share with you.

One Smart Peppy has been in my super horse program for about 18 months now, but he actually started out in Kalley's program at the Atwood Ranch. When I visited the Atwood Ranch two springs ago, Kalley said to me, "Pat, you *have* to see this horse." Peppy had been a breeding stallion for about ten years, so he wasn't very fit, and there wasn't anything really special there that I could see at a glance. After I rode him, though, I could feel that this horse had real potential. Mr. Atwood was incredibly generous and open with me. He still owns Peppy, but he told me to take him and treat him like he was mine. Having a horse with this much talent has been a rare

thing for me; being able to develop and play with Peppy is one of the greatest opportunities I've ever had.

I often use the model of *Talent, Skills, Try* and *Luck* to objectively evaluate where my horses are in their development. The category of *Skills*, in my mind, is foundation before specialization—and the foundation is Level 4 in all Four Savvys. That's my minimum goal for every horse that I try to help optimize or choose as a lifetime partner. When you look at *Talent*, it's often a very specific thing—for example, if I said Peppy could be a super horse in cutting, that doesn't mean he'd be a super horse in show jumping—so *Talent* and *Skills* have to balance each other



out. Talented horses are often the ones that suffer the most from today's specialization-focused horse industry because, from their first day under saddle, they are hurried along to be ready to compete; they never really get a solid foundation.

Peppy had been a breeding stallion for about ten years, so he wasn't very fit, and there wasn't anything really special there that I could see at a glance.

The *Try* quotient—that's where I start balancing obedience and exuberance. If you take *Talent* and *Skill* and combine them you have obedience, and then, if you add *Try*, you get exuberance. When you think of exuberance, you might think of watching a horse or a person or a dog doing something it really loves to do—that's where *Luck* comes in. When you get to do what you love, you feel like the luckiest individual on the face of the earth.

If you allowed 25 points for each of the four categories, so that you'd have a total of 100 in the end, I'd give Peppy a 21 out of 25 for *Talent*. He's unbelievably balanced, athletic and smart. One thing that makes Peppy special is that he's really versatile. He does beautifully in the lessons with Walter Zettl, he's done some slide stops between 25 and 40 feet long, he changes leads easily, and when it comes to cutting—which is what he was bred to do—he's one of the most talented horses I've ever ridden.

Moving on to *Skills*, I'd say I'm pleased but not satisfied with Peppy's skill development. I'd say he's pretty much Level 4 in all Four Savvys now—almost Level 5 in FreeStyle and Finesse—and that's fantastic. At the same time, however, he's coming 15 this year, so in some senses, he's way behind. Peppy only had a little bit of riding as a two- and three-year-old, then was in a breeding barn for 10 or 11 years and didn't get any positive education during that time. In light of that—and keeping in mind that he's only been back in development for about two years—he's doing great; but when I look at *Skills*, I ask, "What are they, and are they on schedule?" So right now I'd give him about a 17.

If you'd asked me about Peppy's *Try* six months ago, I'd have given him a lower score than what I'm giving him now. He's one of those horses that the further we go, the harder he tries. I have *Try* in the formula because it gives me an indicator of how fast or slow I need to go with that horse. If you're trying to shove the *Skills* in too fast or too hard, his *Try* meter will go down. You can also go too slow and bore the horse; that will decrease his *Try*, too. Six months ago I'd have given Peppy a 12 on *Try*, but today I'll give him a 17. It's increasing rapidly, and

that really tells me that I'm revealing his *Talent* and developing his *Skills* at a pace that works for him.

When it comes to *Luck*, Peppy's an interesting case. I'm sure in some ways he thought he was the luckiest horse in the world just being a breeding stallion for all those years. At the same time, with his *Try* coming up like it has, I can tell that he's feeling pretty lucky. He greets me at the door of his stall, nickers at me when I walk by and takes the bridle eagerly. He's definitely one of life's volunteers. Still, I'd only give him a 12 out of 25, because he's at the spot now where he should have been as a five-year-old. So he'll probably never really be able to have a high, high score on *Luck*. On the other hand, I'm really lucky to have him. I'm excited to see how far I can go with a horse like him. 🐾

Peppy's TSTL Rating

Category	Current Rating/Optimum
Talent	21/25
Skills	17/25
Try	17/25
Luck	12/25

What would your horse's scores be, given your goals for his future? What does that tell you about what you can do to optimize your horse's potential?

The Scoop on Peppy

Registered Name: One Smart Peppy

Breed: Quarter Horse

Date of Birth: 8 May 1995

Horsenality™: Left-Brain Extrovert

Primary Type: Western Performance, Cutting

Sire: Peppy San Badger, a.k.a. Little Peppy.

1977 National Cutting Horse Association (NCHA) Futurity Champion, 1978 NCHA Derby Champion, 1980 NCHA Hall of Fame inductee and 1981 NCHA Finals Champion. Little Peppy's offspring have won in excess of \$20 million.

Dam: One Time Soon. One Time Soon is by Smart Little Lena, Champion of the 1982 NCHA Futurity, 1983 NCHA Super Stakes and Derby and 1984 NCHA Masters.

Parelli Essentials

Before... After

Having had so many comments about how different my horse Allure looks these days, I thought it was about time to show the before and after transformation of his physical health.

The 'before' is from five years ago when I first got him. Notice that Allure's mane is coarse, dry and frizzy, and quite bleached out. His coat is an odd orangey-brown-red and he would bleach blond in the summer.

Some of you may also notice the bulge at his throat, this is an enlarged thyroid gland (goiter) and is a contributor to some of his extreme behavior.

The 'after' photo was taken at the 2007 Savvy Conference last September. As you can see his color has changed dramatically and the goiter is virtually gone. His coat is soft and shiny all year long (even winter) and his mane is almost straight.

When I first got Allure we didn't have Essentials. He was on vitamins, minerals and our feeding program. But when I started him on Essentials about 18 months later I saw changes within a week and every year he just looks and feels better and better. This summer he only had a few bleached hairs on his shoulders and tail instead of over his whole body, and his hormonal stability has also changed. This amazing formula of amino acids and herbs is alchemy at its finest. (By the way, Essentials was formulated by the same man who inspired my research on Horsenality.)

Essentials makes you realize that it's not about the nutrition... unless you can utilize those nutrients! Make sure your horse is able to digest the nutrients you're giving him. Learn about the Parelli feeding program by using the Savvy Club website search.

Essentials - way more than a supplement.

Late last spring we adopted a rescue horse we named Champ. Champ is a handsome Saddlebred who had been neglected and starved prior to being rescued. Coming as he did from such a horrible experience, he had a coarse, dry coat of a funny, washed-out orange color. His mane and tail were coarse, dry and brittle. His hooves were in really bad shape and, besides not having been trimmed very well, they had the telltale markings of an animal that was starving.

After we had his teeth floated and added Essentials to his grain mixture, Champ is like a new horse! His coat has turned a magnificent color of red and is soft to the touch. His mane and tail are also tame! The flaring of his hooves has stopped, and they are looking very healthy. We sometimes turn him out in the big arena at the barn where he is being boarded, and he loves to run and prance, tossing his head and kicking up his heels! He has beautiful feet and sometimes leaps in the air like a deer. At 16.2 he is so graceful; it is just amazing to watch him.

Champ and I cannot thank you enough for this product. He's a whole different horse in less than one year! —Jeri, Eddie and Champ



BEFORE:
Allure in 2003

AFTER:
Allure in 2007

Education WITH LINDA



photo by Coco

Protecting Your Space by Linda Parelli

There are two reasons a horse will invade your space or run over the top of you: He's terrified, and you're in the way of his escape or he does not see you as his alpha.

We've all heard Pat say the word "anthropomorphic" [an-thra-po-mor-fick], and there is no more graphic opportunity to understand the danger of thinking this way than in this situation. Anthropomorphic means "attributing human characteristics to nonhumans," and we see it all the time in comics, movies and TV shows when animals are dressed up as humans, are able to speak and have human issues. But anthropomorphism is alive and well in the horse industry on a different level. Here are some examples:

- "My horse would never hurt me; he loves me."
- "He's competitive. That's why he always wants to be in front."
- "He loves to pull back."
- "He did it to get back at me."

These comments apply *human* rationale to horse behavior, which is not only a misconception, it is dangerous. We need to apply *equine* rationale to horse behavior or we are at great risk of getting hurt, simply because we don't understand the nature of horses. So let's look at these again.

- "He would only hurt me if he felt his life or dominance was threatened." He doesn't even know he's hurting you; you just got in the way of his survival instincts. He doesn't know you're not as resilient as another horse! This is why it's so important to be savvy around horses. You need to know how to read behavior, handle horses, ride and develop them without inciting fear or fight.
- "He's afraid and lacking leadership. That's why he's tense, impulsive and restless." It's not usually the most confident horse that's at the front of a running herd. It's the one that gets there and then can't get back to the safest place—the middle.
- "He panics when he feels trapped and pulls back because he's trying to get away." A horse that pulls back is acting in fear, is claustrophobic and panics because he cannot get away.
- Horses don't seek revenge, but they do react according to their feelings about people who treat them badly. That's why a good relationship is so important!

When a horse is afraid, his logic is all about survival, and he has two primary instincts for protecting his life.

Flight—A prey animal's first reaction is to *run*!

or...

Fight—If trapped, fight for your life. Fight to get free.

If the horse is not afraid, then the equine logic has to do with dominance, which is mostly about breeding rights. This is one of the reasons many people get hurt handling stallions; they fail to realize they are interrupting a horse's sex drive. Aggression and hormones are a very dangerous combination, and this applies to any horse that is "entire" (stallion or mare). Some geldings can have stallion-like behaviors due to being gelded late or ineffectively, but all dominant, Left-Brain horses can decide to push over or charge at a human who is threatening them in some way. Again, savvy is important because the idea is to not drive a horse to that point of frustration, defensiveness or aggression.

Horses don't run over their leader

Probably the most humbling thing to realize is that a horse rarely runs into or over his alpha. Even when afraid, horses do whatever it takes to try to avoid bumping into their alpha! So what does that tell you about a horse that runs over a human? Obviously he does not see that human as his alpha.

The more you allow your horse to push you around, the less he thinks of you as his leader. The more you allow your horse to be fearful when in your presence, the more likely he is to run over the top of you when afraid, especially if you hold him short and close. It's vitally important to learn how to calm* your horse down and to do less sooner rather than more later. The more worried your horse is, the farther away from you he should be. I have a little saying for when a horse is high on adrenaline: "You are in no condition to be close to me!"

Respecting alpha vs. fearing the human

How do you know if it's a respect issue or a fear issue? Of course, in both cases the horse does not respect your space, but understanding the origin is important because it will help you successfully prevent the problem.

Respect issue: The horse is...

- a Left-Brain Horsenality™ (extrovert or introvert)
- pushy, shoving you with his nose
- invading your space slowly or "casually" (is not spooking or afraid at the time)
- aggressive or dominant, especially at feeding time
- confident around humans

- coming “through” you with purpose—to move you
- using his head like a weapon

Fear issue: The horse is...

- tense
- spooky, over-reactive
- moving quickly
- wide-eyed, head up
- coming at you with his shoulder, head looking the other way, running “blind”
- trying to run toward safety—the barn, another horse

Being a prey animal, any horse has the potential to run over you when afraid; that’s why it’s so important to teach *every* horse to respect your space as a habit, so it becomes his default. Remember, horses don’t run over their alpha! Their alpha is a horse they both trust and respect.

Protecting your space

One of the first things to do with a horse is teach him to stay out of your space. It’s hard to get hurt when a horse is well outside your “bubble!”

Without moving your feet, use the Porcupine Game and the Driving Game to...

- move him backwards and away
- move the hindquarters
- move the forehand
- move the horse sideways

At first have a Carrot Stick™ and Savvy String, but get to where you can do it with just your hands.

Here are some more tactics to practice:

- Do jumping jacks without looking at him.
- Walk him halfway through a gate, turn toward him and back him up. This will teach him not to rush through gates.
- Back up a few steps when leading him. This will teach him not to crowd you and to move away or back up when you back up. At first you will want to use jumping jacks or flapping elbows to assert yourself.
- Swing the end of your rope like a propeller in front of you as you walk to drive your horse sideways away from you, then walk backwards and get him to back up the same way.
- As your horse starts to understand and yield more easily, you can surprise him more and go a little faster. In this way you will simulate something sudden happening and install a habit of moving away from you rather than running over the top of you.

What do you do if your horse gets scared or spooks at your actions? Simply stop and wait until he is calm, allowing the rope to feed through your hands as far as the horse needs to



go. You may even need a longer rope if your horse is particularly flighty, but don't stop the education. You may need to be less animated at first so you don't scare him so much, and as he starts to understand you can increase the intensity. It's important to allow him to drift and move away as much as he needs to, so be careful not to grab the rope and stop him or it will confuse him and even make him more worried.

Your horse needs to get out of your space but not be afraid of you.

Blocks

Blocks are martial arts moves in which you do something like stick your arm up to stop your horse's head coming at your head. It blocks the move, but it is not a hit. Your arm shoots out and stops at a certain point; it has energy and strong intention to literally block any further advancement of your horse's head into your space.

This is particularly useful with Left-Brain horses that tend to use their heads like weapons, casually wiping you out with a single swoop! Blocks can also be useful for preventing bites and have a completely different result than smacking a horse. They're more effective, and there is no emotion behind a block.

Practice doing blocks with a friend. Ask your friend to clasp his or her hands together with outstretched arms and then imitate a horse swinging his head into your space. As your friend does this, throw your arm out to block it with the side of your forearm (not your hand). You'll need to move your feet

into a power position, spaced apart and diagonally opposed, and project your energy from your stomach, which will add a lot of intention to the block and prevent it from being flimsy. As you get better at this, have the friend do it from the side and from behind you to help develop your peripheral vision.

Remember, the block is not a hit or a swipe! It is a block that stops hard at an invisible point a couple of feet from your body, as if you have an invisible shield around you. Your horse needs to feel as though he ran into a wall, even though he couldn't see it. There should be no force projecting into his space, just enough force to protect yours.

Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse!

In the beginning you need to do some or all of these every day for a minimum of seven days. Then two or three times a week, and then intermittently after that. You want to test it every now and then to make sure it's a well-installed habit. You are rehearsing for the unexpected and the unthinkable, so that if something suddenly happens, both of you will automatically do the right thing.

Make no assumptions when it comes to being around horses, and teach your horse to respect your space, not just for yourself, but for the safety of others who come around him... especially children. 🐾

**Rapid and repeated disengagement of the hindquarters helps horses get calmer, and you can disengage from several feet away.*



Saddle Savvy

Do you know that many behavioral issues when riding can be attributed to a saddle that is restrictive or even painful? Not only that, but your horse's posture and muscling are strong indicators for this.

How can you tell a saddle doesn't fit/isn't comfortable for your horse?

Most saddles are too narrow and tight behind the shoulders. Often, too, the tree or bars are curved to match the shape of the horse's back when he's standing still instead of when he moves . . . and those two states are vastly different!

If the saddle is too narrow/restrictive:

- It feels/looks tight over or behind the shoulders.
- You cannot feel the back of your horse's shoulder blade (scapula) when you reach under the front of the saddle after it is cinched.
- The saddle perches on top of your horse rather than "hugging" him and looking more part of him.
- There is muscle wasting behind the shoulders or along the back and neck, creating an unevenly muscled or "hollow" topline.
- The shoulders look like round lumps, pushed forward, caused by the horse avoiding contact with the front of the saddle. This can also make the neck look short.
- The saddle's internal structure (bars) is bowed out rather than more flat.

If the saddle is too wide:

- The saddle gullet will touch the withers (even after shimmying).
- It could be unstable because you'll have to use too much shimmying/padding.

When it is right, the saddle will:

- Tip down slightly in the front when put on without a pad. This means it's a little too wide for the horse at rest but will give him room to use his muscles when he moves. You should need to use shims toward the front to balance it; otherwise the saddle is probably too narrow.
- Hug the horse, look like part of him, especially when you look from the back. It will be wide across the seat and give maximum clearance from the spine, distributing weight more toward his ribs.
- Encourage the horse to stretch his neck and lift his back, be lighter on his front feet, get a longer stride and have a happier expression!

Visit www.parellisaddles.com for great detail about saddle savvy. You'll be fascinated as you compare your own observations and experiences with what we have learned.



An extreme example of the muscular wasting caused by a narrow, restrictive saddle. This horse was well cared for and under ten years old!

Level with Me by Linda Parelli

Setting goals such as learning particular skills and tasks is important for never-ending self-improvement.

The Levels Pathway has hundreds of tasks for you to learn to do. They are organized into Four Savvys and Four Levels of expertise. In this section we will focus on some specific tasks from the Self-Assessment checklist, which can be found on the Savvy Club website: www.parellisavvyclub.com.

ON LINE LEVEL 1/2:

Yo-Yo Over A Pole

Description

One of the hardest things to do is to think laterally when approaching a task with your horse. Think of it as a puzzle to solve, but not in the way a human would solve it—in a way that would make sense to the horse's psyche and build his confidence.

Purpose

Teaching your horse to back over a pole can be very challenging because this is not something a horse would think of doing by himself. So why teach him? Because it has a myriad of benefits: It will help him become calmer, smarter, braver and more athletic! It will also teach you to become a better puzzle solver, to think differently when teaching a horse something new or challenging.

Directions

First of all, you must have a good Yo-Yo Game without the pole. This means it's straight and responsive at Phase 2 (it does not have to be fast). Phase 2 means a gentle wiggle of the rope.

Rather than starting with your horse in front of the pole and trying to back him over it, do the opposite. Put him on the other side of the pole so that he has to come forward over it first. But don't bring him all the way; you're going to do something quite different.

1. Bring him to the pole, then back him up to the end of the line again before he steps over it. This will be the start of installing a "get back to the safe spot" thought. Allow him to rest there before bringing him forward again. Repeat.
2. Now ask him to put one foot over the pole and then immediately back him up to the safe spot and rest. Repeat.
3. Now have him put the second front foot over and back up to the safe spot.

4. Repeat. And repeat each step until it's easy. Got the picture?
5. Now the third foot (which is the first hind foot)...and back up to the safe spot. Repeat.
6. Then the fourth foot. By this time your horse is thinking so strongly about getting back after putting a foot over the pole that backing all the way over the pole is easy; in fact, it is almost his idea.

You may find that your horse starts becoming a little less easy to bring forward because he's thinking so much about getting back. Just slow down, don't force him, and it will all even out in the end. Know that having the backup more intense at first will work best for this task in the beginning. Once your horse is confident, you'll be able to start any way you want—in front of the pole, behind the pole—it won't matter. But in the learning process it does. Don't even try it from in front of the pole if your horse is not doing it easily and confidently from the other side first.

Level of Quality

If this is the first time, take your time. Depending on your horse's level of confidence and your own, you may only get the front feet done today. The next day it will be easier, and you will be able to do more. In the end you are looking for your horse to be able to do it confidently, with little to no hesitation, and at Phase 2. One day you'll do it at Liberty, too.





FINESSE LEVEL 3/4:

Rock Your Horse—forward and backward, side to side.

Description

Cause your horse to shift his weight, leaning forward and backward and rocking from right to left. It's not fast, but slow and rhythmic.

Purpose

This is a great exercise in weight shift, sensitivity and responsiveness.

More than anything, this task helps you to discover just how sensitive a horse is and how little you need to do in order to influence him. You'll learn how to *almost* ask your horse to go forward and backward and to *almost* lift his feet to go side-ways, but not quite. This will improve your refinement skills in a big way.

Directions

Forward and Backward

Raise your posture and take up a gentle contact with your reins so your horse arches his neck and comes to attention.

By using just Phase 1 or 2, start to ask your horse to go forward, but not so much that he would move his feet. The moment he shifts his weight a little forward to take up the walk, quit and pet him.

Do the same for going backward; you are asking for a backup, but quit before you get it, right when his weight shifts to his hindquarters.

Once you can isolate each one, you can do them one after the other in a slow, rocking rhythm forward and back, forward and back, four to six times before you stop. It's important to do several of them in succession because it helps both you and your horse get into the rhythm and combine the maneuvers rather than keep thinking of them in isolation.

Side to Side

Raise your posture and take up a gentle contact with your reins so your horse arches his neck and comes to attention.

Keep your hands close together and take both slightly over to the right while at the same time pressing with your outside leg—your whole leg, as if you were about to side pass to the right with the front end leading. Again, the moment your horse shifts his weight to go, quit and pet him. Do the same for the other side and then combine them as a side-to-side rocking motion.

Note: It's more the front end that will sway than the whole horse, and the first couple of sways will encourage the horse to spread his front feet out a little bit to get in the right position

Level of Quality

At first it might be a bit confusing for your horse to be so subtle, so you'll need to exaggerate and actually get him to move his feet a step or two. From there you can refine it until he doesn't lift his feet at all and just rocks his weight.

When it all comes together, it will look as if you're barely moving.

Linda's Journey

Defining Fluidity for FreeStyle and Finesse

Since my education has gone to a whole new level these past couple of years under the careful coaching of dressage master Walter Zettl, I'm finding it impacting me in many different ways.

My riding has gone to higher levels for sure, but I'm also beginning to make important distinctions between the fluidity required for FreeStyle riding and that for Finesse, which makes me an even better teacher for students of Levels 3, 4 and above.

Before beginning my work with Walter, I was really happy with my riding. I was Level 4–5 FreeStyle. My balance and independent seat were very good. I felt safe and confident, and could ride bareback and bridleless, fast or slow. I could do a lot of fun things in Finesse with a nice “soft feel”—transitions, flying changes, lateral maneuvers, even a kind of passage. But once I began exploring dressage through Walter's teaching, I embarked on a whole new level of discovery concerning engagement of the hindquarters and a horse needing to come “over his back” into a positive contact. This has kept me awake many a night, not just to figure it out for myself, but also to understand the grand scheme of things when it comes to increasingly advanced riding.

It's not about right or wrong; it's about what is appropriate for the kind of riding you are doing.

As you've so often heard me say, “Whatever you want your horse to do in his body, you have to do in your body.” That is a founding principle of Fluidity, and it wasn't until I met Janice Dulak (Pilates for Dressage) that I learned what engaged hindquarters and spine felt like! I covered this somewhat in the October Savvy Club DVD with Jamie, helping him to go from a FreeStyle seat to a posture more conducive to riding with Finesse and, later, engagement.

To feel your own spine engage, try these one at a time. You'll need to sit on the edge of a chair or stand.

1. Tighten your thighs and cheeks by wrapping your outer thigh muscles. This should cause your hips to widen at the front and your tailbone to tuck under and point forward.
2. Pull your belly button back as far as you can...and now even more! This will influence your lower and middle spine.
3. Bring your ribs toward the center by tightening the muscles across the front of them as if you are trussing a turkey. This will influence your upper spine.

At first you might find it impossible to breathe, but don't worry—that will change as you get more skilled at this, so breathe when you need to! Relax and start again, accomplishing each one in isolation.

Now do steps 1–3 in combination so you end up with your whole body engaged.

You might start to notice a tiny tingling feeling on the inside of your spine. This is when you know you are starting to engage your spine!

Here's the interesting part: You have to engage your hindquarters and abdomen in order to engage your spine. You can't just make your spine do it! So this is also what your horse needs to do. He has to be able to exert his core stomach muscles in order to lift and engage his back, but he can't do it unless you can. You can imagine what it takes to learn how to do this while riding! It's fascinating and exciting for me.

FreeStyle vs. Finesse

I was coaching the Mastery Students yesterday and working on improving their Fluidity for riding with contact and Finesse. They are all good FreeStyle riders but were having some trouble with Finesse—or their horses were! Some horses were not coming up and round over their back although they were beautifully responsive. As I explained what they needed to do, some exclaimed that this was the opposite of what we'd been teaching. I guess it sounds that way, but really it's not about right or wrong; it's about what is appropriate for the kind of riding you are doing.

So I thought it might be interesting to share this chart with you in which I compare riding dynamics when it comes to riding with FreeStyle and riding with Finesse. What's most important to grasp here is that you cannot effectively ride FreeStyle—especially bareback and bridleless—using a Finesse seat, and vice versa.



FreeStyle

Legs

- Draped like a wet towel

Seat

- Neutral, connected
- Active to get the gait, then neutral to maintain it.

Upper Body

- Natural
- Not slumping and not erect either; somewhere nicely in between. Semi-engaged core depending on specific maneuvers.

Hands/Reins

- One hand, Casual Rein with no contact OR
- No reins, one hand on mane/neck string, the other holding Carrot Stick™; or holding a Carrot Stick™ in each hand.



Finesse

Legs

- Hugging, with positive contact*

Seat

- Active/engaged, “hovering”
- Eliciting constant drive and energy from the horse, providing room for the horse’s back to come up.

Upper Body

- Erect posture, engaged core/abdomen
- Think “ballroom dancing,” but not with a hollow back!

Hands/Reins

- Two hands, Concentrated Rein, contact.

Note: Contact does not mean pulling. It is a positive connection that helps frame the horse but does not restrict him.

**I learned this very recently from our Spanish dressage team friend, Luis Lucio. 🐾*

Can You?

A Parelli Professional's Perspective on Teaching by Tasking

by Jerry Williams

"Can you get your horse to back through this gate one step at a time?" That was the first comment my first Parelli instructor made. Sheepishly I said, "I think so." "When she can do it several times calmly, come find me and show me" was his reply as he walked off. I didn't realize it at the time, but that was my introduction to the idea of a "Can You."

As an instructor, I see the importance of the "Can You" for teaching, but as a new student I had a different perspective. I had hauled my new horse eight hours to Colorado in a borrowed horse trailer with a truck that was too small. I was planning to sleep in a tent and cook my meals on a camp stove, all in the hope that I could advance my horsemanship with a Parelli instructor. Needless to say, I was excited and a little nervous. So when he gave me that assignment and walked off, I just stood there a little bewildered. I had spent a lot of money and gone to a lot of effort to be ignored, or so I thought. At first I felt deserted, which led me to question why I was there in the first place, and then the feelings of frustration began to set in.

The task itself seemed easy enough: just back my horse one step at a time through a Priefert panel gate and then have her come back forward. The gate was three feet wide, with a bar

across the ground and one that arched over the top. To me it didn't seem like much of a squeeze, but to my ex-racehorse, Sara, it was a *big* deal. Not that she was totally freaked out, but it was confining, and she wanted to squirt through the opening. Slowly, as I started to focus on the task at hand, things started to change in me. What at first seemed like a useless task became a challenge, and I became fascinated with the way that my horse was responding. I slowed things way down and gave her more time, and she began to think her way through the gate. It took us about 15–20 minutes, but she was finally going back and forth calmly through the gate one step at a time.

From that first "Can You" I learned that I didn't really know my horse. I had not understood that she was claustrophobic and wanted to race through the gate. I didn't realize that I was rushing her just to get tasks done. There were many little insights that I learned from thoughtfully backing Sara through

that gate; as a student at the time, I had no idea you could learn so much from something that seemed so simple.

Now that I'm an instructor, I clearly see that the idea of task-based teaching makes a lot of sense for people learning a new skill. As I write this article, I am seeing that I use the "Can You" a lot more than I even realized in my teaching. I use task-teaching to reveal an issue, to provide a solution or to set a student up to see things in a slightly different way. I often use the "Can You" to help me evaluate where the student is at with his or her horse. Whether the result is good or bad, it is always revealing. Sometimes I might ask a student to jump the horse over a barrel—not to see if the horse can do it, but to observe the relationship between the two.



By watching them together I get a better idea of how to help them. In other words, I use the "Can You" as a diagnostic tool to identify problem areas. Other times, when I've already identified a problem area, I might use a "Can You" as a prescription to provide a solution. For example, if a student or a horse is scattered or distracted, I give them a task that they can focus on.

A lot of times I'll use a "Can You" to allow the student to learn something about the horse instead of me just telling them. Or I might use a "Can You" to cause students to ask meaningful questions about themselves or their horses.

Here are two basic and simple "Can You's" that I usually have all my students do at one time or another:

1. Can you get your horse to do a simple Squeeze over a log or pole one foot at a time On Line? All horses should be able to do this, but it is particularly good for extroverted horses, as they tend to want to rush over the Squeeze. As your horse gets good at this simple version, try making it a little more challenging. One thing I do is lay two barrels alongside the pole and make more of a Squeeze.

2. Can you back your horse one foot at a time over a log On Line? Again, all horses should be able to do this, but it is particularly good for low impulsive or introverted horses. The key here is to take it slow, read your horse and don't push him through any thresholds.

Both of these "Can You's" are really versions of the Squeeze Game, and I like both of them because you have a great opportunity to observe your horse and see how he thinks. It is also a good chance to reflect on how the concept of Horsenality™ affects your horse's behavior and the strategies you might use.

The "Can You" approach to teaching and learning can be extremely beneficial to illustrate and reveal a number of insights for both horse and human. My challenge to you is to go back through your Parelli educational materials and find ten "Can You's" with which to task yourself and see what you can learn about your horse and yourself. 🐾

Jerry S. Williams is a Licensed Parelli Professional and former member of the Parelli Center faculty. He invites comments about this article on his blog at www.parelliworld.com.

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The Joy of Conscious Incompetence

by Teri Sprague

There you are, minding your business, tootling along with the flow, when suddenly something happens, and gasp! You know that you don't know!

That consciousness of incompetence brings up a multitude of emotions. The list usually includes feelings of frustration, fear, anger, disappointment and even guilt, but rarely joy . . . especially when it comes to our horsemanship. How do top horsemen turn that frustration into fascination and joy? For me, it comes from recognizing that conscious incompetence just means I have arrived at the boundary of my learning zone. I am about to embark on a learning curve!

Most people perceive the horseman's journey as an upward climb punctuated by peaks and valleys. I am absolutely convinced that is not true. Rather, it is a slightly upward line punctuated by steep climbs that eventually level off to another period of relative but slight upwardness.

It is during that steep climb that we feel as if we are in the pit. Mentally, emotionally and/or physically, the journey is arduous, painful and hard! Climbing is *hard*, and the steeper the



photo by Coco

learning curve, the harder it is, and the more we *feel* as if we are in the pit! Then, usually quite suddenly, we feel as though we are on a new plane.

In January of 2009 I experienced a heartbreaking incident with my horse Promise. After what was perhaps the most awesome session I had ever had with her On Line, she expressed her opinion of my horsemanship by kicking me in both hands while I was line driving her! As I tried to make sense of the incident, I realized that although she had performed awesomely, I had gotten greedy on at least two occasions on my walk back to the pen before she kicked me. Just prior to the kick, I had gotten greedy again.

Several days later I had the opportunity to troubleshoot what had happened in a session with Linda. In that session, Promise acted completely differently due to the new environment. I was so confused! I lamented, "I feel like I'm back in Level 1!"

"No," Linda said, "this is Level 4!" It was not so much what we were doing, but the subtleties in reading my horse that I needed to learn in order to make progress. Little did I know that I was about to embark on a long, steep learning curve.

Even though at the end of the session Linda assured me I was on the right track, for weeks I struggled to overcome the challenge. The challenge was not so much what was happening with me and my horse, but what was going on in my mind. My thoughts kept getting in my way. Instead of feeling for my horse when she presented confusing behavior, I got wrapped up in blaming myself for her past and doubting my future.

Part of my solution was to learn how to be present with my horse instead of having an agenda that focused on the future or became emotional about the past. There is a book on Pat's reading list that helped me a lot: *The Inner Game of Tennis* by Timothy Gallway. Although its title does not sound like a book for struggling horse(wo)men, its principles of being present and allowing your body to do what it needs to do and *not* thinking so much provided the breakthrough I needed. It helped me understand that it is what we choose to think and do in challenging times that will make or break our journey. Focusing on the past or future is rarely productive when dealing with creatures of the moment. The good news is that we have the power to choose!

There is a saying that goes "Where knowledge ends, violence begins." I would like to say "Where knowledge

ends, fear, frustration and feeling like a failure begin." It is these emotions that lead to anger and—potentially—violence. In the first Level 1 Parelli Program the Theory Guide outlines the steps of change: Denial, Blame, Anger, and Chaos. If we recognize these signs and seek out more knowledge, we will be able to speed our journey along.

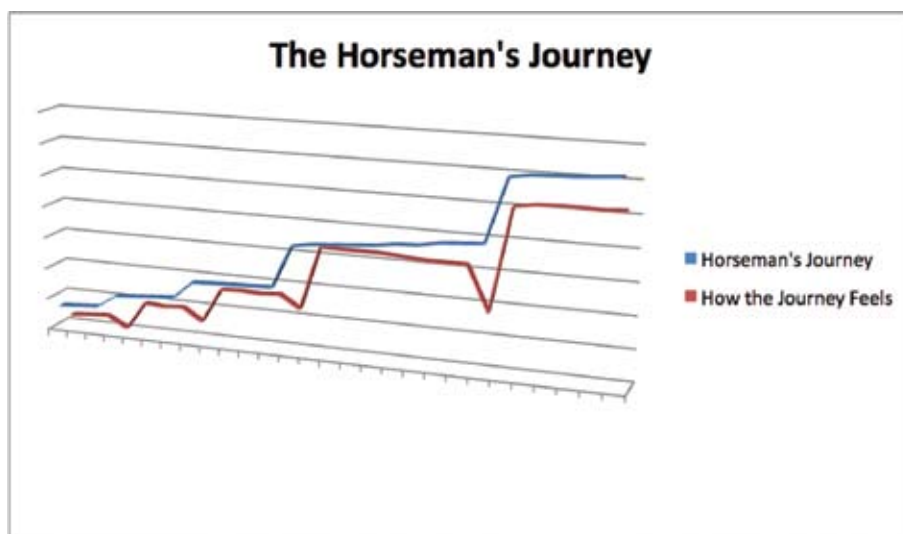
Here is how Pat said it in the Theory Guide: "Seek help and support; do whatever you can to get out of [chaos]. At the same time, don't be surprised by it. You now know that it could happen at any time and at any stage of your development. . . Be open and willing to change. Whatever you do, don't give up on your horse or yourself!"

Fortunately, when it comes to the Parelli journey there are lots of resources: Savvy Club Vault, Parelli Professionals, Savvy Club DVDs, Levels Program packs and the Gold member hotline, among others. Once we have the knowledge, it is easier to dig up an "attitude of try" that will enable us to continue the journey. The only way to fail is to give up, and the best news is that once we have persevered, that knowledge and learning is ours forever!

One of my favorite quotes is by Henry Ford, who said, "Failure is only the opportunity to more intelligently begin again."

Now it is your turn to more intelligently begin again—and love every minute of it by recognizing that difficulties mark the beginning of your learning curve! 🐾

Teri Sprague is a Licensed 3-Star Parelli Instructor and 3-Star Horse Professional. She has been a Parelli Professional since 1997. Beside teaching lessons and training horses at her home base in Colorado, she is available nationwide for clinics. She has developed a 10-week program to help people overcome confidence issues related to their horsemanship journey.



Phase 4

by Christine Massinger

Let's face it: if you study Parelli, chances are you love your horse. If you are anything like I was, you are convinced that your horse will know you love him, and that will be all it takes to develop a perfect relationship with your equine partner. After all, we are conditioned to believe such sayings as "Love conquers all," "All you need is love," "The greatest of these is love," "Love, love and Puppy Chow" . . . you get the picture.

In the horse world, however, Parelli teaches us that there are three words that begin with L that help us establish a perfect relationship with our horse; each of these words is as important as the next. Love is only one of these three words. Love, Language and Leadership in equal doses are the keys to success with horses.

The need to go to Phase 4 decreases each time you assert it with justice.

A couple of years ago I had the privilege of attending a six-week course at the Parelli Center in Ocala, Florida. During a teaching session we students were asked to approach a barrel with our Carrot Stick™ and to rub the barrel with our stick, pretending it was a newborn foal. The first part of the exercise was to teach us to use the Carrot Stick™ as an extension of our hand and to touch our horse with our heart. None of us had any difficulty with this. Then we were asked to imagine that the

barrel was now a stallion that had come to do the foal harm. The second part of the teaching session was to get us comfortable with going from a Friendly Game with the Carrot Stick™ to an immediate and effective level of firmness called Phase 4. But there was more to the second part of the lesson. The Phase 4 could not be delivered with any emotion at all. In this part of the exercise many students had difficulty. Some students struggled immensely to bring up their firmness one phase at a time all the way to Phase 4, even though the barrel was an inanimate object. Some students were reluctant because they simply did not feel comfortable projecting that amount of energy. Many students—myself included—could not go to Phase 4 without some emotion behind the action.

Now ask yourself how you would do. Could you go to Phase 4 if necessary without feeling any anger or fear?

I have heard Pat and Linda teach that horses "draw the line" on other horses with Phase 4 all the time. I see it in my own



herd of thirteen horses on a daily basis. If the alpha horse wants the beta horse to move its feet and the beta is not doing so, the alpha doesn't repetitively and ineffectively nag at Phase 2 or 3. The alpha goes to Phase 4 clearly and assertively. That is how the alpha stays the alpha. After the Phase 4 is delivered, the beta horse doesn't hold a grudge or walk away sulking. The beta horse is relieved that there is a leader. The beta horse takes comfort in knowing that the alpha horse is the protector of the herd.

This is counter to human psychology. We all too often attribute our human characteristics to our animals, but in so doing, we do them a disservice. Many times I struggled with being as assertive as necessary. I thought I was being too hard on my horse or that I didn't give her enough chances. I would blame myself for her lack of responsiveness, and if I did go to Phase 4, I would feel guilty. The result was an unconfident, untrusting, confused horse. I've learned through several years of studying Parelli that going to Phase 4 when necessary actually instills my partner with confidence and trust in my leadership. Another interesting phenomenon occurs when you are finally willing to go to Phase 4: The need to go to Phase 4 decreases each time you assert it with justice.

And therein lies the key. Assert Phase 4 only when it is just! Pat and Linda teach in Principle 5: "The attitude of justice is effective." Justice is a prerequisite to the increase in phase. Horses are not unjust with each other. They don't go to Phase 4

merely because they can or because they feel like it. They go to the phase required to assert leadership and to survive. When we hear Pat and Linda describe the phases as "Suggest, ask, tell, promise" they are teaching us to think and act as horses do. If the suggest, ask and tell are being ignored by our horses, the promise must follow.

How do we know when it is just to go to Phase 4? Well, Pat and Linda teach us that, too. The answer, they say, depends upon our horse's Horsenality™. With our Left-Brain, dominant partners Parelli teaches us to make it more of a game, to use a long Phase 1 and a quick 2, 3, 4, whereas our Right-Brain partners need more time before an increase in phase so they are able to think and not be afraid.

But whether we play with Left-Brain or Right-Brain partners, we need to know that sometimes we will have to go to Phase 4. After all, as we grow in understanding of our horses we learn that our love for them is not enough. We must accompany that love with the language and the leadership that they long for and deserve. 🐾

Phase 1 is as light and subtle as possible. Phase 4 is as firm as necessary. Using four phases of firmness keeps the emotions out of it and is clear to the horse. It's different from just smacking a horse as punishment.



Vital Signs!

by Teri Sprague with technical assistance provided by Kim Ellis

Besides the usual vital signs—temperature, pulse, respiration, etc.—Parelli students have another important gauge with which to evaluate their horse's health: Horsenality™!

In fact, Horsenality™—or, more accurately, changes in Horsenality™—may be your first indicator of trouble. When you are well acquainted with your horse's likes, dislikes, routines and behaviors (including stance, activity and rest patterns, introvertedness/extrovertedness, etc.), small and subtle changes will be noticed and alert you to check more traditional indicators (see sidebar). When you determine through observation that there may be a medical issue arising, you can aid your vet significantly by taking the horse's vital signs and reporting them when you make the call. The three most important vitals are temperature, pulse and respiration. If colic is a concern, add gut sounds, capillary-refill test and the skin tent or pinch test.

Taking a horse's vital signs is nothing more than a Friendly Game. Practice the procedures before you need them; then, when the horse is ill, it will not be a challenge. In addition, by taking and recording your horse's vital signs regularly you will have a baseline to which you can compare when things seem off. Some horses' normal readings may be slightly higher or lower than the established normal range. Knowing what is normal for your horse will help you know how you should respond when the readings change or when behavior tells you to there may be a problem.

Temperature

Normal Range: 99.0 to 101.2 degrees

RED ALERT: Over 103 degrees

Procedure: Prepare a thermometer with petroleum jelly. Using the Friendly Game principle of approach and retreat, stroke the hindquarters and caress the tail. Stroke closer and closer to the anus until the horse lifts the tail. Some horses respond nicely when you stroke above the opening. Others require you to stroke the opening itself. Gently insert the thermometer. I highly recommend the digital type—it can't get lost, doesn't break and beeps when it is done.

Heart Rate

Normal Range: 28 to 40 at rest

RED ALERT: Higher than 55 at rest or weak or irregular

Procedure: The easiest and most accurate way to determine your horse's heart rate is with a stethoscope. These are avail-

able from many pharmacies for under \$50 or on the internet for as little as \$10. Position your horse with his left leg slightly forward. Using the Friendly Game and approach and retreat as necessary, place the head of the stethoscope as far forward under the elbow as possible. Count the "lub-dubs" for 15 seconds and multiply by four. Be sure to count either the "lub" or the "dub"—not both—or you will double the rate inadvertently.

Respiration

Normal Range: 6 to 20 at rest

RED ALERT: More than 20; exaggerated flaring of nostrils or rib movements; unusual substances in the nostrils such as foam, food or mucus.

Procedure: Observe the ribs just in front of and below the flank. Count either the expansions (inspirations) or contractions (expirations).

Gut Sounds

Normal: An assortment of gurgles, squeaks, squawks, etc. on both sides

RED ALERT: Faint, few, or no sounds one or both sides

Procedure: There are two places to listen for gut sounds: the top of the "cowlick" of the flank (checks the upper quadrants) and behind the ribs just above the level of the stifle (checks the lower quadrants). Use the Friendly Game principles to place a stethoscope or your ear on the side of the horse. Listen for 20 seconds. In those 20 seconds, if you continually hear gut sounds for at least 10 to 15 seconds, the horse is normal to hyper-normal. Less than ten seconds of continuous sound is considered abnormal.

Be sure to listen to both places on both sides.

Capillary-refill and Mucous Membrane Color

Normal Range: 2 seconds or less; light pink color

RED ALERT: 3 seconds or more; unusual color of gums or nostrils: red, brown, yellow, blue

Procedure: Capillary-refill time is an indicator of blood circulation and is useful in determining a horse's hydration level or state of shock. Using the Friendly Game and approach and retreat as necessary, stroke the muzzle, then the lips,

then inside the lips. Lift the upper lip to expose the gum. Gently press a finger or thumb on the gum until it blanches white, then release. Observe how long it takes to return to the original pink color.



Skin Tent/Pinch Test

Normal Range: Immediate return

RED ALERT: The pinch remains or flattens slowly

Procedure: The pinch test is another indicator of hydration level. A pinch that remains or flattens slowly indicates

extreme dehydration. On the neck near the shoulder, pinch a fold of skin and release. Observe how long it takes to flatten out.

Teach your horses to respond with relaxation while you are taking their vital signs by doing it on a regular basis. You will help them learn to trust both you and the vet. You may also find a reason for unusual behavior or training concerns. Although Love, Language, and Leadership issues account for nearly all training challenges, it pays to check your horse's health when you notice changes that defy explanation with the 3 L's. 🐾

Teri Sprague is a Licensed 3-Star Parelli Instructor and 3-Star Horse Professional. She has been a Parelli Professional since 1997. Besides teaching lessons and clinics and training horses, she has developed a Horse Behavior course for veterinarian students, which she teaches at Colorado State University.

Kim Ellis is the Large Animal Nurse Supervisor at Colorado State University—Vet Teaching Hospital.

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*Levels graduates since 1993 pose proudly with Pat Parelli at the Fort Worth, TX
and Lakeland, FL Celebration events!*



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Fort Worth, TX Celebration*



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Lakeland, FL Celebration*



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*Level 2 Graduates
Lakeland, FL Celebration*



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Fort Worth, TX Celebration*



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